HOUSEHOLD WORDS

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HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

VOLUME XIV.

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A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

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THE DIARY OF ANNE RODWAY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

MARCH 3rd, 1840. A long letter to-day from Robert, which surprised and vexed and fluttered me so, that I have been sadly behind-hand with my work ever since. He writes in worse spirits than last time, and absolutely declares that he is poorer even than when he went to America, and that he has made up his mind to come home to London. How happy I should be at this news, if he only returned to me a prosperous man! As it is, though I love him dearly, I cannot look forward to the meeting him again, disappointed and broken down and poorer than ever, without a feeling almost of death for both of us. I was twenty-six last birthday and he was thirty-three; and there seems less chance now than ever of being married. It is all I can do to keep myself by my needle; and his prospects, since he failed in the small stationery business three years ago, are worse, if possible, than mine. Not that I mind so much for myself; women, in all ways of life, and especially in my dress-making way, learn, I think, to be more patient than men. What I dread is Robert's despondency, and the hard struggle he will have in this cruel city to get his bread—let alone making money enough to marry me. So little as poor people want to set up in house-keeping and be happy together, it seems hard that they can't get it when they are honest and hearty, and willing to work. The clergy-man said in his sermon, last Sunday evening, that all things were ordered for the best, and we are all put into the stations in life that are properest for us. I suppose he was right, being a very clever gentleman who fills the church to crowding; but I think I should have understood him better if I had not been very hungry at the time, in consequence of my own station in life being nothing but Plain Needlewoman.

March 4th. Mary Mallison came down to my room to take a cup of tea with me. I read her bits of Robert's letter, to show her that if she has her troubles, I have mine too; but I could not succeed in cheering her. She says she is born to misfortune, and that, as long back as she can remember, she has never had the least morsel of luck to be thankful for. I told her to go and look in my glass, and to say if she had nothing to be thankful for then; for Mary is a very pretty girl, and would look still prettier if she could be more cheerful and dress neater. However, my compliment did no good. She rattled her spoon impatiently in her tea-cup, and said, "If I was only as good a hand at needlework as you are, Anne, I would change faces with the ugliest girl in London." "Not you!" says I, laughing. She looked at me for a moment, and shook her head, and was out of the room before I could get up and stop her. She always runs off in that way when she is going to cry, having a kind of pride about letting other people see her in tears.

March 5th.—A fright about Mary. I had not seen her all day, as she does not work at the same place where I do; and in the evening she never came down to have tea with me, or sent me word to go to her. So just before I went to bed I ran up-stairs to say good-night. She did not answer when I knocked; and when I stepped softly into the room I saw her in bed, asleep, with her work not half done, lying about the room in the untidiest way. There was nothing remarkable in that, and I was just going away on tip-toe, when a tiny bottle and wine-glass on the chair by her bed-side caught my eye. I thought she was ill and had been taking physic, and looked at the bottle. It was marked in large letters, "Laudanum—Poison." My heart gave a jump as if it was going to fly out of me. I laid hold of her with both hands, and shook her with all my might. She was sleeping heavily, and woke slowly, as it seemed to me—but still she did wake. I tried to pull her out of bed, having heard that people ought to be always walked up and down when they have taken laudanum; but she resisted, and pushed me away violently.

"Anne!" says she in a fright. "For gracious sake, what's come to you! Are you out of your senses?"

"O, Mary! Mary!" says I, holding up the bottle before her, "If I hadn't come in when I did——" And I laid hold of her to shake her again.

She looked puzzled at me for a moment—then smiled (the first time I had seen her do so for many a long day)—then put her arms round my neck.

"Don't be frightened about me, Anne," she says, "I am not worth it, and there is no need."

"No need!" says I, out of breath. "No need, when the bottle has got Poison marked on it!"

"Poison, dear, if you take it all," says Mary, looking at me very tenderly; "and a night's rest if you only take a little."

I watched her for a moment; doubtful whether I ought to believe what she said, or to alarm the house. But there was no sleepiness now in her eyes, and nothing drowsy in her voice; and she sat up in bed quite easily without anything to support her.

"You have given me a dreadful fright, Mary," says I, sitting down by her in the chair, and beginning, by this time, to feel rather faint after being startled so.

She jumped out of bed to get me a drop of water; and kissed me, and said how sorry she was, and how undeserving of so much interest being taken in her. At the same time, she tried to possess herself of the laudanum-bottle which I still kept cuddled up tight in my own hands.

"No," says I. "You have got into a low-spirited despairing way. I won't trust you with it."

"I am afraid I can't do without it," says Mary, in her usual quiet, hopeless voice. "What with work that I can't get through as I ought, and troubles that I can't help thinking of, sleep won't come to me unless I take a few drops out of that bottle. Don't keep it away from me, Anne; it's the only thing in the world that makes me forget myself."

"Forget yourself!" says I. "You have no right to talk in that way, at your age. There's something horrible in the notion of a girl of eighteen sleeping with a bottle of laudanum by her bedside every night. We all of us have our troubles. Haven't I got mine?"

"You can do twice the work I can, twice as well as me," says Mary. "You are never scolded and rated at for awkwardness with your needle; and I always am. You can pay for your room every week; and I am three weeks in debt for mine."

"A little more practice," says I, "and a little more courage, and you will soon do better. You have got all your life before you—"

"I wish I was at the end of it," says she, breaking in. "I'm alone in the world, and my life's no good to me."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself for saying so," says I. "Haven't you got me for a friend. Didn't I take a fancy to you when first you left your stepmother, and came to lodge in this house? And haven't I been sisters with you ever since? Suppose you are alone in the world, am I much better off? I'm an orphan, like you. I've almost as many things in pawn as you; and, if your pockets are empty, mine have only got ninepence in them, to last me for all the rest of the week."

"Your father and mother were honest people," says Mary, obstinately. "My mother ran away from home, and died in a hospital. My father was always drunk, and always beating me. My stepmother is as good as dead, for all she cares about me. My only brother is thousands of miles away in foreign parts, and never writes to me, and never helps me with a farthing. My sweetheart—"

She stopped, and the red flew into her face. I knew, if she went on that way, she would only get to the saddest part of her sad story, and give both herself and me unnecessary pain.

"My sweetheart is too poor to marry me, Mary," I said. "So I'm not so much to be envied, even there. But let's give over disputing which is worst off. Lie down in bed, and let me tuck you up. I'll put a stitch or two into that work of yours while you go to sleep."

Instead of doing what I told her, she burst out crying (being very like a child in some of her ways), and hugged me so tight round the neck, that she quite hurt me. I let her go on, till she had worn herself out, and was obliged to lie down. Even then, her last few words, before she dropped off to sleep, were such as I was half-sorry, half-frightened, to hear.

"I won't plague you long, Anne," she said. "I haven't courage to go out of the world as you seem to fear I shall. But I began my life wretchedly, and wretchedly I am sentenced to end it."

It was of no use lecturing her again, for she closed her eyes. I tucked her up as neatly as I could, and put her petticoat over her; for the bed-clothes were scanty, and her hands felt cold. She looked so pretty and delicate as she fell asleep, that it quite made my heart ache to see her, after such talk as we had held together. I just waited long enough to be quite sure that she was in the land of dreams; then emptied the horrible laudanum-bottle into the grate, took up her half-done work, and, going out softly, left her for that night.

March 6th. Sent off a long letter to Robert, begging and entreating him not to be so down-hearted, and not to leave America without making another effort. I told him I could bear any trial except the wretchedness of seeing him come back a helpless, broken-down man, trying uselessly to begin life again, when too old for a change. It was not till after I had posted my own letter, and read over parts of Robert's again, that the suspicion suddenly floated across me, for the first time, that he might have sailed for England immediately after writing to me. There were expressions in the letter which seemed to indicate that he had some such headlong

project in his mind. And yet, surely if it were so, I ought to have noticed them at the first reading. I can only hope I am wrong in my present interpretation of much of what he has written to me—hope it earnestly for both our sakes.

This has been a doleful day for me. I have been uneasy about Robert, and uneasy about Mary. My mind is haunted by those last words of hers: "I began my life wretchedly, and wretchedly I am sure to end it." Her usual melancholy way of talking never produced the same impression on me that I feel now. Perhaps the discovery of the laudanum-bottle is the cause of this. I would give many a hard day's work to know what to do for Mary's good. My heart warmed to her when we first met in the same lodging-house, two years ago; and, although I am not one of the over-affectionate sort myself, I feel as if I could go to the world's end to serve that girl. Yet, strange to say, if I was asked why I was so fond of her, I don't think I should know how to answer the question.

March 7th. I am almost ashamed to write it down, even in this journal, which no eyes but mine ever look on; yet I must honestly confess to myself, that here I am, at nearly one in the morning, sitting up in a state of serious uneasiness, because Mary has not yet come home. I walked with her, this morning, to the place where she works, and tried to lead her into talking of the relations she has got who are still alive. My motive in doing this was to see if she dropped anything in the course of conversation which might suggest a way of helping her interests with those who are bound to give her all reasonable assistance. But the little I could get her to say to me led to nothing. Instead of answering my questions about her stepmother and her brother, she persisted at first, in the strangest way, in talking of her father, who was dead and gone, and of one Noah Truscott, who had been the worst of all the bad friends he had, and had taught him to drink and game. When I did get her to speak of her brother, she only knew that he had gone out to a place called Assam, where they grew tea. How he was doing, or whether he was there still, she did not seem to know, never having heard a word from him for years and years past. As for her stepmother, Mary, not unnaturally, flew into a passion the moment I spoke of her. She keeps an eating-house at Hammersmith, and could have given Mary good employment in it; but she seems always to have hated her, and to have made her life so wretched with abuse and ill-usage, that she had no refuge left but to go away from home, and do her best to make a living for herself. Her husband (Mary's father) appears to have behaved badly to her; and, after his death, she took the wicked course of revenging herself on her step-daughter. I felt, after this, that it was impossible Mary could go back, and that it was the hard necessity of her position, as it is of mine, that she should struggle on to make a decent livelihood without assistance from any of her relations. I confessed as much as this to her; but I added that I would try to get her employment with the persons for whom I work, who pay higher wages, and show a little more indulgence to those under them, than the people to whom she is now obliged to look for support. I spoke much more confidently than I felt, about being able to do this; and left her, as I thought, in better spirits than usual. She promised to be back to-night to tea, at nine o'clock, and now it is nearly one in the morning, and she is not home yet. If it was any other girl I should not feel uneasy. I should make up my mind that there was extra work to be done in a hurry, and that they were keeping her late, and I should go to bed. But Mary is so unfortunate in everything that happens to her, and her own melancholy talk about herself keeps hanging about my mind so, that I have fears on her account which would not distress me about any one else. It seems inexcusably silly to think such a thing, much more to write it down; but I have a kind of nervous dread upon me that some accident—

What does that loud knocking at the street door mean? And those voices and heavy footsteps outside? Some lodger who has lost his key, I suppose. And yet, my heart—— What a coward I have become all of a sudden!

More knocking and louder voices. I must run to the door and see what it is. O, Mary! Mary! I hope I am not going to have another fright about you; but I feel sadly like it.

March 8th.

March 9th.

March 10th.

March 11th. O, me! all the troubles I have ever had in my life are as nothing to the trouble I am in now. For three days I have not been able to write a single line in this journal, which I have kept so regularly, ever since I was a girl. For three days I have not once thought of Robert—I, who am always thinking of him at other times. My poor, dear, unhappy Mary, the worst I feared for you on that night when I sat up alone was far below the dreadful calamity that has really happened. How can I write about it, with my eyes full of tears and my hand all of a tremble? I don't even know why I am sitting down at my desk now, unless it is habit that keeps me to my old everyday task, in spite of all the grief and fear which seems to unfit me entirely for performing it.

The people of the house were asleep and lazy on that dreadful night, and I was the first to open the door. Never, never, could I describe in writing, or even say in plain talk, though it is so much easier, what I felt when I saw two policemen come in, carrying

between them what seemed to me to be a dead girl, and that girl Mary! I caught hold of her and gave a scream that must have alarmed the whole house; for, frightened people came crowding down-stairs in their night-dresses. There was a dreadful confusion and noise of loud talking, but I heard nothing, and saw nothing, till I had got her into my room, and laid on my bed. I stooped down, frantic-like, to kiss her, and saw an awful mark of a blow on her left temple, and felt, at the same time, a feeble flutter of her breath on my cheek. The discovery that she was not dead seemed to give me back my senses again. I told one of the policemen where the nearest doctor was to be found, and sat down by the bedside while he was gone, and bathed her poor head with cold water. She never opened her eyes, or moved, or spoke; but she breathed, and that was enough for me, because it was enough for life.

The policeman left in the room was a big, thick-voiced, pompous man, with a horrible unfeeling pleasure in hearing himself talk before an assembly of frightened, silent people. He told us how he had found her, as if he had been telling a story in a tap-room, and began with saying, "I don't think the young woman was drunk." Drunk! My Mary, who might have been a born lady for all the spirits she ever touched. Drunk! I could have struck the man for uttering the word, with her lying, poor suffering angel, so white and still and helpless before him. As it was, I gave him a look; but he was too stupid to understand it, and went droning on, saying the same thing over and over again in the same words. And yet the story of how they found her was, like all the sad stories I have ever heard told in real life, so very, very short. They had just seen her lying along on the kerb-stone, a few streets off, and had taken her to the station-house. There she had been searched, and one of my cards, that I give to ladies who promise me employment, had been found in her pocket, and so they had brought her to our house. This was all the man really had to tell. There was nobody near her when she was found, and no evidence to show how the blow on her temple had been inflicted.

What a time it was before the doctor came, and how dreadful to hear him say, after he had looked at her, that he was afraid all the medical men in the world could be of no use here! He could not get her to swallow anything; and the more he tried to bring her back to her senses, the less chance there seemed of his succeeding. He examined the blow on her temple, and said he thought she must have fallen down in a fit of some sort, and struck her head against the pavement, and so have given her brain what he was afraid was a fatal shake. I asked what was to be done if she showed any return to sense in the night. He said, "Send for me directly;" and stopped for a little while afterwards stroking her head gently with his hand, and whispering to himself, "Poor girl, so young and so pretty!" I had felt, some minutes before, as if I could have struck the policeman; and I felt now as if I could have thrown my arms round the doctor's neck and kissed him. I did put out my hand, when he took up his hat, and he shook it in the friendliest way. "Don't hope, my dear," he said, and went out.

The rest of the lodgers followed him, all silent and shocked, except the inhuman wretch who owns the house, and lives in idleness on the high rents he wrings from poor people like us. "She's three weeks in my debt," says he, with a scowl and an oath. "Where the devil is my money to come from now?" Brute! brute!

I had a long cry alone with her that seemed to ease my heart a little. She was not the least changed for the better when I had wiped away the tears, and could see her clearly again. I took up her right hand, which lay nearest to me. It was tight clenched. I tried to unclasp the fingers, and succeeded after a little time. Something dark fell out of the palm of her hand as I straightened it. I picked the thing up, and smoothed it out, and saw that it was an end of a man's cravat.

A very old, rotten, dingy strip of black silk, with thin lilac lines, all blurred and deadened with dirt, running across and across the stuff in a sort of trellis-work pattern. One end of the cravat was hemmed in the usual way, the other was all jagged, as if the stuff then in my hands had been torn off violently from the rest of the stuff. A chill ran all over me as I looked at it; for that poor, stained, crumpled end of a cravat seemed to be saying to me, as though it had been in plain words, "If she dies, she has come to her death by foul means, and I am the witness of it."

I had been frightened enough before, lest she should die suddenly and quietly without my knowing it, while we were alone together; but I got into a perfect agony now for fear this last worst affliction should take me by surprise. I don't suppose five minutes passed all that woeful night through, without my getting up and putting my cheek close to her mouth, to feel if the faint breaths still fluttered out of it. They came and went just the same as at first, though the fright I was in often made me fancy they were stilled for ever. Just as the church clocks were striking four, I was startled by seeing the room door open. It was only Dusty Sal (as they call her in the house) the maid-of-all-work. She was wrapped up in the blanket off her bed; her hair was all tumbled over her face; and her eyes were heavy with sleep, as she came up to the bedside where I was sitting.

"I've two hours good before I begin to work," says she, in her hoarse, drowsy voice,

"and I've come to sit up and take my turn at watching her. You lay down and get some sleep on the rug. Here's my blanket for you—I don't mind the cold—it will keep me awake."

"You are very kind—very, very kind and thoughtful, Sally," says I, "but I am too wretched in my mind to want sleep, or rest, or to do anything but wait where I am, and try and hope for the best."

"Then I'll wait, too," says Sally. "I must do something; if there's nothing to do but waiting, I'll wait."

And she sat down opposite me at the foot of the bed, and drew the blanket close round her with a shiver.

"After working so hard as you do, I'm sure you must want all the little rest you can get," says I.

"Excepting only you," says Sally, putting her heavy arm very clumsily, but very gently at the same time, round Mary's feet, and looking hard at the pale, still face on the pillow. "Excepting you, she's the only soul in this house as never swore at me, or give me a hard word that I can remember. When you made puddings on Sundays, and give her half, she always give me a bit. The rest of 'em calls me Dusty Sal. Excepting only you, again, she always called me Sally, as if she knowed me in a friendly way. I ain't no good here, but I ain't no harm neither; and I shall take my turn at the sitting up—that's what I shall do!"

She nestled her head down close at Mary's feet as she spoke those words, and said no more. I once or twice thought she had fallen asleep, but whenever I looked at her, her heavy eyes were always wide open. She never changed her position an inch till the church clocks struck six; then she gave one little squeeze to Mary's feet with her arm, and shuffled out of the room without a word. A minute or two after, I heard her down below, lighting the kitchen fire just as usual.

A little later, the doctor stepped over before his breakfast time, to see if there had been any change in the night. He only shook his head when he looked at her, as if there was no hope. Having nobody else to consult that I could put trust in, I showed him the end of the cravat, and told him of the dreadful suspicion that had arisen in my mind, when I found it in her hand.

"You must keep it carefully, and produce it at the inquest," he said. "I don't know though, that it is likely to lead to anything. The bit of stuff may have been lying on the pavement near her, and her hand may have unconsciously clutched it when she fell. Was she subject to fainting fits?"

"Not more so, sir, than other young girls who are hard-worked and anxious, and weakly from poor living," I answered.

"I can't say that she may not have got that blow from a fall," the doctor went on, looking at her temple again. "I can't say that it presents any positive appearance of having been inflicted by another person. It will be important, however, to ascertain what state of health she was in last night. Have you any idea where she was yesterday evening?"

I told him where she was employed at work, and said I imagined she must have been kept there later than usual.

"I shall pass the place this morning," said the doctor, "in going my rounds among my patients, and I'll just step in and make some inquiries."

I thanked him, and we parted. Just as he was closing the door, he looked in again.

"Was she your sister?" he asked.

"No, sir, only my dear friend."

He said nothing more; but I heard him sigh, as he shut the door softly. Perhaps he had had a sister of his own, and lost her? Perhaps she was like Mary in the face?

The doctor was hours gone away. I began to feel unspeakably forlorn and helpless. So much so, as even to wish selfishly that Robert might really have sailed from America, and might get to London in time to assist and console me. No living creature came into the room but Sally. The first time she brought me some tea; the second and third times she only looked in to see if there was any change, and glanced her eye towards the bed. I had never known her so silent before; it seemed almost as if this dreadful accident had struck her dumb. I ought to have spoken to her, perhaps, but there was something in her face that daunted me; and, besides, the fever of anxiety I was in began to dry up my lips as if they would never be able to shape any words again. I was still tormented by that frightful apprehension of the past night, that she would die without my knowing it—die without saying one word to clear up the awful mystery of this blow, and set the suspicions at rest for ever which I still felt whenever my eyes fell on the end of the old cravat.

At last the doctor came back.

"I think you may safely clear your mind of any doubts to which that bit of stuff may have given rise," he said. "She was, as you supposed, detained late by her employers, and she fainted in the work-room. They most unwisely and unkindly let her go home alone, without giving her any stimulant, as soon as she came to her senses again. Nothing is more probable, under these circumstances, than that she should faint a second time on her way here. A fall on the pavement, without any friendly arm to break it, might have produced even a worse injury than the injury we see. I believe that the only ill-usage to which the poor girl was exposed was the neglect she met with in the work-room."

"You speak very reasonably, I own, sir," said I, not yet quite convinced. "Still, perhaps she may——"

"My poor girl, I told you not to hope," said the doctor, interrupting me. He went to Mary, and lifted up her eyelids, and looked at her eyes while he spoke, then added: "If you still doubt how she came by that blow, do not encourage the idea that any words of hers will ever enlighten you. She will never speak again."

"Not dead! O, sir, don't say she's dead!"

"She is dead to pain and sorrow—dead to speech and recognition. There is more animation in the life of the feeblest insect that flies, than in the life that is left in her. When you look at her now, try to think that she is in Heaven. That is the best comfort I can give you, after telling the hard truth."

I did not believe him. I could not believe him. So long as she breathed at all, so long I was resolved to hope. Soon after the doctor was gone, Sally came in again, and found me listening (if I may call it so) at Mary's lips. She went to where my little hand-glass hangs against the wall, took it down, and gave it to me.

"See if the breath marks it," she said.

Yes; her breath did mark it, but very faintly. Sally cleaned the glass with her apron, and gave it back to me. As she did so, she half stretched out her hand to Mary's face, but drew it in again suddenly, as if she was afraid of soiling Mary's delicate skin with her hard, horny fingers. Going out, she stopped at the foot of the bed, and scraped away a little patch of mud that was on one of Mary's shoes.

"I always used to clean 'em for her," said Sally, "to save her hands from getting blacked. May I take 'em off now, and clean 'em again?"

I nodded my head, for my heart was too heavy to speak. Sally took the shoes off with a slow, awkward tenderness, and went out.

An hour or more must have passed, when, putting the glass over her lips again, I saw no mark on it. I held it closer and closer. I dulled it accidentally with my own breath, and cleaned it. I held it over her again. O, Mary, Mary, the doctor was right! I ought to have only thought of you in Heaven!

Dead, without a word, without a sign,—without a look to tell the true story of the blow that killed her! I could not call to anybody, I could not cry, I could not so much as put the glass down and give her a kiss for the last time. I don't know how long I had sat there with my eyes burning, and my hands deadly cold, when Sally came in with the shoes cleaned, and carried carefully in her apron for fear of a soil touching them. At the sight of that——

I can write no more. My tears drop so fast on the paper that I can see nothing.

March 12th. She died on the afternoon of the eighth. On the morning of the ninth, I wrote, as in duty bound, to her stepmother at Hammersmith. There was no answer. I wrote again: my letter was returned to me this morning, unopened. For all that woman cares, Mary might be buried with a pauper's funeral. But this shall never be, if I pawn everything about me, down to the very gown that is on my back. The bare thought of Mary being buried by the workhouse gave me the spirit to dry my eyes, and go to the undertaker's, and tell him how I was placed. I said, if he would get me an estimate of all that would have to be paid, from first to last, for the cheapest decent funeral that could be had, I would undertake to raise the money. He gave me the estimate, written in this way, like a common bill:

A walking funeral complete	1	13	8
Vestry	0	4	4
Rector	0	4	4
Clerk	0	1	0
Sexton	0	1	0
Beadle	0	1	0
Bell	0	1	9
Six feet of ground	0	2	0
Total	£2	8	4

If I had the heart to give any thought to it, I should be inclined to wish that the Church could afford to do without so many small charges for burying poor people, to whose friends even shillings are of consequence. But it is useless to complain; the money must be raised at once. The charitable doctor—a poor man himself, or he would not be living in our neighbourhood—has subscribed ten shillings towards the expenses; and the coroner, when the inquest was over, added five more. Perhaps others may assist me. If not, I have fortunately clothes and furniture of my own to pawn. And I must set about parting with them without delay; for the funeral is to be to-morrow, the thirteenth. The funeral—Mary's funeral! It is well that the straits and difficulties I am in, keep my mind on the stretch. If I had leisure to grieve, where should I find the courage to face to-morrow?

Thank God, they did not want me at the inquest. The verdict given—with the doctor, the policeman, and two persons from the place where she worked, for witnesses—was Accidental Death. The end of the cravat was produced, and the coroner said that it was certainly enough to suggest suspicion; but the jury, in the absence of any positive evidence, held to the doctor's notion that she had fainted and fallen down, and so got the blow on her temple. They reproved the people where Mary worked for letting her go home alone, without so much as a drop of brandy to support her, after she had fallen into a swoon from exhaustion before their eyes. The coroner added, on his own account, that he thought the reproof was thoroughly deserved. After that, the cravat-end was given back to me, by my own

desire; the police saying that they could make no investigations with such a slight clue to guide them. They may think so, and the coroner, and doctor, and jury may think so; but, in spite of all that has passed, I am now more firmly persuaded than ever that there is some dreadful mystery in connection with that blow on my poor lost Mary's temple which has yet to be revealed, and which may come to be discovered through this very fragment of a cravat that I found in her hand. I cannot give any good reason for why I think so; but I know that if I had been one of the jury at the inquest, nothing should have induced me to consent to such a verdict as Accidental Death.

BIRD HISTORY.

A CERTAIN learned physician, named Peter Belon, a native of the town of Le Mans, the capital of what was then the province of Maine, but is now the department of the river Sarthe, in France, bethought him that very little was known in his native country at the time he lived—the middle of the sixteenth century—of Natural History; and, being moved by the example of Aristotle (at the trifling distance of nearly nineteen hundred years) he resolved, having been a great traveller and eke a great observer (two persons not always united) to give his fellow-citizens and the world, the benefit of his experience and opportunities, and take away the reproach which lay like a shadow over the land.

Prepared by much study for the cultivation of his favourite pursuits, he left France in the year fifteen hundred and forty-seven, being at that time twenty-nine years of age, and travelled successively through Germany, Bohemia, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, returning to Paris after three years absence with a large and valuable collection of plants and specimens of natural history, which he then occupied himself in arranging, preparatory to the publication of the knowledge he had acquired. The first work which he produced was a history of strange fishes and serpents, under the title "De Aquatilibus;" but, tempting as the subject is, I do not at present intend to examine it, having another of his productions before me, which (from the fact of its being a borrowed book, and liable, therefore, to sudden seizure by its owner, who otherwise would never get it back), more immediately claims my attention.

This coveted volume is the celebrated History of the Nature of Birds, with their descriptions and lively portraits, taken from Nature, and written in seven books, and is, perhaps, the principal work on which is founded Peter Belon's claim to be considered the father of modern natural history. In the preface to it he promises—and he keeps his word far better than might have been expected—that nothing shall appear in these books which is not perfectly true; there shall be no false descriptions or portraits of suppositious animals; nothing, in short, that is not to be found in nature. Appropriate to the publication of a work on ornithology, Peter Belon caused this volume to be printed, in the year fifteen hundred and fifty-five, by William Cavellat, in front of the college of Cambray, in Paris, at the sign of the Fat Hen (a sure sign that Peter Belon came from Le Mans, a city famous for its poultry); and that there should be no doubt of the latter fact, the title-page also bore the living portraiture of a domestic fowl in very high condition, enclosed within a circle, on the outer rim of which was inscribed the legend "Gallina in pingui," an inscription that need not again be translated. A portrait of Peter Belon, as he appeared to the justly-admiring world, at the age of thirty-six, also embellished the volume. The learned physician appears to have been a man with a good, sensible, honest countenance, wearing a large Crimean beard, and having a cap on his head, the shape of which, fortunately, has not yet been adopted for the British army.

Like most other old authors, Peter Belon takes some time before he can get fairly under weigh. There are, first, the dedication to the most Christian king—Henry the Second of the name—whose humble scholar the author declares himself to be. Then follows a homily addressed to the reader, chiefly for the purpose of assuring him that, in the lively portraits of the birds which he presents (Ah, could we but reproduce some of them!), he is not practising on his credulity, but that, such as he represents them, the fowls are themselves, and that, where he cannot get an authentic likeness he has refused to invent one.

The royal privilege to publish, sealed with yellow wax—like a bottle of good old wine—comes next, and finally appear several copies of verses in praise of the author, by certain of his friends, which latter had better be skipped, that Peter Belon's volume, which has in it a great deal that is worth reading, may unfold its pages for our gratification. It is not, however, a resumé of the work, or anything like it, that I intend to make, but simply a dip into it—here and there—extending some of the quaint fancies, curious digressions, and sound opinions with which it is interspersed, always desiring our reader to bear in mind that the author was a physician as well as a naturalist.

A word or two, before he fairly enters on his theme, may be allowed him to describe the pains he was in the habit of taking to obtain correct information. "It was my custom," he says, "during my sojourn in Padua, to go down the Brenta every Thursday evening, voyaging all night in order to reach Venice on Friday morning, and to remain there on Saturday and Sunday, as much for

the convenience of seeing birds as well as fishes; and after having conferred with fowlers and fishermen, to return from thence on Sunday evening, thus losing no time by taking the night-boat, and being ready to continue my studies on Monday morning. During which time, on the aforesaid days of Friday and Saturday, there was not a single fowler or fisherman who did not bring to show me every rare creature he had been able to procure."

Commencing, then, "ab ovo," Peter Belon discusses the properties of eggs; but into the processes of fecundation and hatching which he describes, I do not propose to enter, the gastronomic view of the question presenting more novelty. After apologising for the puerility of the subject, he tells us that in his time the French way of eating eggs (they have six hundred and eighty-five ways now, if the Almanach des Gourmands speaks sooth) was by breaking them at the small end and carefully replacing the shell when emptied into the platter; while the Germans, on the other hand—reminding us of Biefuseu and Lilliput—opened their eggs at the side and finished by smashing the shell; in which latter practice, says Belon, they followed the example of the ancients, who held it a thing of evil augury to leave the shells unbroken. Belon then proceeds to discourse on the numerous varieties of eggs, considering those of pigeons, ostriches, pea-hens, geese, and swans are ill-flavoured and indigestible,—not objecting to the eggs of the tortoise or turtle, —but giving the preference, like a person of taste, to those of the domestic fowl, which, he says, "are supposed by many in France to assist greatly in prolonging life;" and he instances the case of Pope Paul the Third, who used, with that end in view, to eat two new-laid eggs for breakfast every morning. As to their shape, he remarks that long eggs are supposed to be much better eating than round ones; but without insisting on this point, he has no hesitation in declaring that all are highly invigorating, as truffles are, and artichokes, and raw oysters. Artichokes, indeed, were so much esteemed in Belon's time, that "no great nobleman feeling himself unwell would finish his dinner without them,"—eating them by way of dessert. Belon objects to hard boiled eggs, or such as are too much fried, "on account of their engendering bad humours," but upon poached eggs (œufs pochéz) he looks with considerable favour. In all cases he prefers plain boiled eggs (time—three minutes and a quarter) to those which are roasted; notwithstanding the well-known proverb: "There's wisdom in the roasting of eggs." The best way of preserving eggs, he says, is to keep them in a cool place, bury them in salt, or dip them in brine.

As the chicken issues naturally from the egg, so dining upon the one is the regular sequence to breakfasting on the other. The younger your pullet, says Belon, the easier it is of digestion, though he allows you occasionally to eat an elderly male bird, when prescribed medicinally (hormis le coq. qui est souvêt pris pour medicine). "Roasted or grilled fowls are generally the most savoury; those which are boiled furnish more humid nourishment to the body. The first are eaten hot, the last cold." This rule, however, does not, he tells us, always hold good: "Because, if any one writing on the quality of the flesh of birds, happened to be in a country where the people fed on a particular kind not eaten elsewhere, and a male bird already old and tough were offered him (avenait qu'on luy presentast de quelque oyseau des-ia viel et endurcy), he ought not to conclude that its flesh is necessarily fibrous and hard." With all respect for the opinion of honest Peter Belon, I should be inclined to think that a tough old cock, whatever his nation, was somewhat difficult of digestion. I have a very vivid recollection of a fowl of this sort at a certain hotel in Abbeville, where nothing else was to be had for dinner, which the waiter assured me was not to be surpassed in tenderness; a quality he might have displayed towards his family when alive, but which certainly did not belong to him after he was roasted. It is, perhaps, on the tolerant principle of respecting other people's prejudices (I can account for Belon's conclusion no other way), that he does not exclude even birds of prey from good men's feasts. "We know by experience," he observes (not his own experience, I hope), "what has taken place in Crete, where the young ones of the vulture which have fallen from their rocky nests near Voulèsmeni, have been proved at least as good eating as a fine capon. And although some of the inhabitants (the greater part, I should imagine) think that the old birds are not good to eat, because they feed on carrion, the fact is otherwise; for good falconers say that the hawk, vulture, and falcon are excellent meat, and being roasted or boiled, like poultry, are found to be well-tasted and tender. (Fancy a tender vulture!) We constantly see, if any of these birds kill themselves, or break a limb in hunting game, that the falconers do not hesitate to dress them for the table." In Auvergne, he adds, the peasants of the Limagne, and in the mountains, too, eat the flesh of the goivan, a species of eagle; so that it may be concluded that birds of prey, whether old or young, are tender,—an inference which I presume to doubt. One saving clause Peter Belon has, which has at all times done good service. If people generally are not in the habit of eating kites, owls, and so forth, there are some who do: "tastes merely differ"—(les appetits des hommes ne se ressemblent en aucune manière).

The transition is easy from these delicacies to other less questionable birds, and the manner of preparing them for the pot or spit;

and brings Peter Belon to what he evidently likes—a good dinner in a general way. "You may talk," he says, "of Spaniards, Portuguese, English, Flemings, Italians, Hungarians, or Germans, but none of them, in dinner-giving, come up to the French. The latter begin with meats disguised a thousand ways (mille petits desguisements de chair); and this first entry, as it is called, consists of what is soft and liquid, and ought to be sent in hot, such as soups, fricassees, hashes, and salads"! (Hot salads are a rarity now-a-days). The second course is roast and boiled, of different kinds of meat, as well of birds as of terrestrial animals, "it being well understood that no fish is eaten except on fast-days." The dinner ends with "cold things, such as fruits, preparations of milk and sweets." This is the outline of a dinner only; but when Peter Belon enters into a detailed bill of fare, the newspaper report of a Lord Mayor's dinner pales beside it. A few of the names of these dishes—as well as they can be translated—are worth preserving. What do you think of pilgrim capons—lions—made of the white meat of pullets; wild boar venison with chestnuts; diamond-pointed jelly; goslings dressed with malvoisie; feet (whose feet?) with infernal sauce (pieds à la saulce d'enfer); counterfeit sea-hog; laurelled quails; partridges with capers; veal sausages; hop salad; chestnut butterflies; golden-backed woodcock pasties; ox-heel pasties; plumed peacocks; tipsy cake (gasteaux joyeux); little cabbages all hot (petits chouy tous chaulds); and, amongst other varieties, pomegranate salad?

In treating of the uses to which birds have been applied, Peter Belon does not omit divination. It is pretty clear, however, that he has no faith in the auruspices, though he lets them down gently. "These soothsayers exercised their mystery in the contemplation of the inward parts as well of birds as of other animals, when offered up for sacrifice. The question must then be asked, whether, by this inspection, they really could foretell the things that were to come, and if there were any probability, what they promised turning out true? There can be little doubt that this system of divination had a very simple origin, beginning by cajoling private persons, and promising them what they desired (which is the greatest pleasure men can receive), and afterwards, by investing it with a religious character, and turning the same to their own profit." The French soldiers, in Belon's time, imitated the Romans so far as to carry the sacred cock with their baggage when they took the field; but it was for a very intelligible species of augury,—to know, by his crowing, when the day was about to break. Belon had much too good sense to credit either the superstitions of the Romans or those of his own day, and was probably only restrained by his fear of the Church, from expressing his opinions too plainly. Passing from divination to sorcery, he says: "Every contemplative man must have had reason to despise the ignorant people who believe that sorcerers have the power attributed to them. We have seen many condemned to death; but all have been either poor idiots or madmen. Now, of two things, one must happen: that if they do mischief, it must either be by the employment of some venomous drug put into the mouth, or otherwise applied, or by invocations. It is not often that one hears of people of quality being accused of sorcery—only the poorer sort; and to tell the truth, no man of judgment would apply his mind to such absurdities. To prevent the common people from doing so, it is the custom once a-week to prohibit them formally. It may easily happen that one of this sort, troubled in his wits, should fancy incredible things, and even acknowledge to having committed them; but we must set this down to the nature of their disease." In this way sensible Peter Belon disposes of the lycanthropists and other self-created wizards. On the subject of antipathies, however, he entertains a belief that it is reasonable; as in the case of the fox and the stork, which are sworn foes, ever since the practical jokes, I suppose, which we all know they played on each other.

Being himself a physician, Peter Belon enlarges upon the maladies of birds; but he tells us that, with the exception of falcons, which are more especially under the care of man, they are their own doctors. "The pelican, which builds its nest on the ground, finding its young stung by a serpent, weeps bitterly, and piercing its own breast, gives its own blood to cure them." (This is a new reading of the old story). "Quails, when they are indisposed, swallow the seeds of hellebore; and starlings take hemlock. The herb chélidoine (celandine, from the Greek kelidon, a swallow) derives its name from the fact that the swallow administers the juice of the plant to her young. The stork physics himself with marjoram. Wood pigeons, ravens, blackbirds, jays and partridges take laurel; while turtle-doves, pigeons, and cocks prescribe bird-weed. Ducks and geese eat sage." (Sage enters largely into the affair, in combination with onions, when ducks and geese are eaten). "Cranes and herons employ marsh rushes. Thrushes and many smaller birds swallow the seeds of the ivy—which would be hurtful diet for man (qui seroit viande mauvaise à l'homme)." Not much worse, however, than hellebore or hemlock! But it would seem that the eagle family are exempt from the ordinary ailments of birds; for, in speaking of the Chrysaëtos, or great royal eagle, Belon tells us: "Eagles never change their place of abode, but always return to the same nest. It has thus been observed that they are long-lived. But becoming old, the beak grows so long that it becomes bent, and prevents the bird

from eating, so that it dies, not of any malady, or extreme old age, but simply because it cannot make use of its beak." I fear this is not one of the facts derived from Belon's own observation.

Our fashionable ladies have a passion for eider-down; but did they ever hear that the vulture can supply them with an article quite as soft? "Their skin," says our author, "is almost as thick as that of a kid, and under the throat is a spot about the breadth of a palm, where the feathers are reddish, like the hair of a calf; and these feathers have no quills, any more than those on both sides of the neck and under the wings, where the down is so white that it shines like silk. The furriers, after removing the large feathers, leave the down, and curry the skins for mantles, which are worth a large sum of money. In France they use them chiefly to place on the stomach (what we call bosom-friends). It would scarcely be believed that the vulture's skin is so stout, if one had not seen it. Being in Egypt and on the plains of Arabia Deserta, we have noticed that the vultures are large and numerous, and the down from a couple of dozen of these would quite suffice for a large robe. At Cairo, on the Bezestein, where merchandise is exposed for sale, the traveller may obtain silken dresses lined with the skins of vultures, both black and white."

Belon was a great observer of all the birds of prey, and appears to have taken many notes of their habits while living near the Monts d'Or, in Auvergne, under the protection of M. Duprat, the Bishop of Clermont. It was there he learnt the fact about the peasantry eating the goivan, called also the boudrée, which he thus describes: "There is not a peasant in the Limagne (a great plain) of Auvergne who does not know the goivan, and how to capture him with traps baited with frogs, or with lime, but more commonly with snares. He is taken principally in the winter, when he is very good to eat, for he is so fat that no other bird comes near him in that respect. The peasants lard or boil him, and find his flesh quite as good as that of a hen. This eagle eats rats, mice, frogs, lizards, snails, caterpillars, and sometimes serpents."

That there may be no doubt about the last-named viand being food for eagles, one of Peter Belon's lively portraitures follows the statement, in which a goivan is depicted in the act of dining on a serpent, twisted into a figure of eight (as well he might be), and a number of astonished frogs and fishes scurrying away for dear life,—all save one philosophical member of the tadpole family, who, sitting on the tumultuous waves of an adjacent ditch, calmly contemplates the scene. It is observable throughout the plates in Belon's work that the smaller quadrupeds endure the infliction of being devoured alive with far greater resignation than the Reptilia. I have before me at this moment the portrait of a rabbit, on whose back a buzzard is standing as if in the act of going to sing, while the long-eared animal on which he has pounced seems to apprehend his fate no more than if he were a music-stand. A mouse in the claws of a speckled magpie, puts on, in another plate, an air of equal indifference.

Amongst the birds of prey known to the French villagers—and to their cost—is one called by the singular name of White John (Jan le Blanc), or The bird of St. Martin,—but why the latter name was bestowed on it, Belon is at a loss to discover. The first is obvious enough, for its belly and part of its tail are of spotless white. This fellow is very daring, and carries off fowls and rabbits from under the eyes of the owners; he feeds largely, too, upon partridges and all the smaller birds, so that he is not a Cheap John, at all events. But Belon has one comfort: White John has a natural antagonist in the Hobby-hawk, and the way they fight in the air till they tumble entangled to the ground and are taken, is quite a pleasant thing to see (moult plaisant à voir). This combat is not depicted; but on the next page there is a striking delineation of the manner in which a falconer lures a bird of prey. He does it in this wise: a hawk having caught a partridge, stands on its back in the air, quietly devouring it, and the cunning fowler takes this opportunity of approaching with the leg of another bird in his hand, which he offers on his knees to the hawk, in the expectation, apparently, that the greedy bird of prey will give up the whole for a part. Of the share which the falconer's dog has in the transaction, I say nothing; because, though in the foreground of the picture, he is not a quarter the size of the victim partridge. It must be confessed that Belon's descriptions are more satisfactory than the artist's illustrations. This remark, however, does not apply to the actual portraits of the birds, which are in most instances very accurate. Nothing, for instance, can be better done than the Royal Kite, which some in France call Huo, and others Escoufle. This bird, being a lover of carrion, is protected; so much so, that "in England a fine is imposed on those who kill him." Belon records a pleasant piece of pastime which this kite affords the infidels:

"The Turks who live at Constantinople take pleasure in throwing lumps of raw meat into the air, which the kites pounce upon so rapidly that they seize and carry it off before it can fall to the ground."

The Venetian nobles amuse themselves differently—not with kites, but cormorants. When the weather is calm, they go out on the lagoons in light boots, two or three dozen in company, each boat being rowed by six men, and pulled very swiftly. Having surrounded the cormorant (like French hunts-

men with a fox, to prevent him from getting away and giving them a run), he cannot rise in the air (why not?), but dives under the water, and every time he shows his head above the surface, the noblemen let fly at him with their cross-bows, till at last he is thoroughly done up, is half-suffocated, and gives in. "It is a fine sight to behold this sport (c'est un beau spectacle de voir un tel deduit), and also is to see a cormorant having caught a tolerably-sized eel, which he tries to swallow, but has to fight a long time with it before he can get it down." The cormorants themselves are, oddly enough, not thought good eating by the common people, who say of them that they are "a dish for the devil" (qui voudroit jestoyer le diable, il luy faudroit doñer de tels oyseaux); but Belon does not think them so bad as they say (toute fois ne sont si mauvais qu'on crië).

The stork, unfortunately, did not, when Belon flourished, enjoy the same immunity; for though he admits that the Romans despised them at table, he says, "now they are looked upon as a royal dish." He moreover tells us that the gizzard of a stork is an antidote to poison, and a remedy against squinting (le gesier de la cigogne est bon contre les venins et qui en aura mangé ne sera lousche en sa vie)! It appears also that even the ostrich, which can digest iron, is itself digested by Libyan gastronomers, who eat the flesh and sell the feathers.

This tendency to discover what birds are most eatable, is manifested throughout the volume of Peter Belon. Arriving at the noble Alectrion or Rooster of the United States, he cites the following recipe, from Dioscorides, for the concoction of cock-broth. "Take a fine strong old bird, and having properly trussed him, stuff him well with roots of fern, the seed of chartamus (whatever that may be), salt of mercury, and soldanella (a purgative sea-weed), and, having sewn him up, boil him well down." A potage this, which bears some resemblance to "the sillakickaby of the ancients," described in Peregrine Pickle, and, I should think, nearly as agreeable.

The majority of the birds in Belon's book are accurately described and too well-known to afford much opportunity for quoting from what he says of their forms and habits, but now and then we meet with a rara avis. Such, for instance is the "Gellinote de bois" (Gelinotte) which, though still found in the Ardennes, and occasionally a visitor to Monsieurs Chevet's shop in the Palais Royal, is rare enough to merit description at second-hand. What their price may be I know not, but three hundred years ago they cost two crowns a-piece, and were only seen at the banquets of princes and the wedding-feasts of great lords. "The feathers on the back are like those of the woodcock; the breast and belly white, spotted with black; the neck is like that of a pheasant; the head and beak resemble a partridge; the tail feathers are black with white tips, the large wing-feathers variegated like the owl; down to the feet the legs are feathered like the grouse." If the gelinotte combines the flavour as well as the plumage of the birds just mentioned (omitting the owl) I should say it is worth the price which Monsieur Chevet puts upon it before he stuffs it with the truffles.

The Vanneau is another bird which, common enough in the marshy districts of France (particularly in Bourbon Vendée) is, I believe, unknown in England. It is a wading-bird, and bears some resemblance to the peacock: hence, its name, corrupted from paonneau to vanneau; but the peasants call it dinhuit, on account of its cry. It is crested with five or six long black feathers, and is of changeable hue: in size it is not much larger than a plover, and is perched on very high red legs. There is no question about the estimation as a delicacy in which the vanneau is still held.

Belon has a good deal to say about quails, and the various modes of catching them. One way is by means of an instrument made of leather and bone, which, set in motion, utters a sound like the voice of the female bird, and is called courcaillet, on hearing which the males run rapidly and are caught in the fowler's net; but this device is only effectual during the season of courting. Every one has noticed how low the quail's cages are made. Belon says, it is because they are so given to jumping and excitement that they would destroy themselves were the cages higher. Of the crested lark (in French, cochevis), he tells us, on the authority of several writers of antiquity, that when made into a broth or roasted—like punch—they cure the colic; we all know what capital pâtés are made of the lark uncrested. We learn that the woodcock—how admirable is he, too, in a pâté—though called bécasse, in French, on account of the length of his bill, ought to be designated "vvitcoc," that being an English word, which signifies "cock of the wood," and corresponds with the Greek term, "xilomita." Some people, Belon says, call him Avis cœca (blind bird), because he suffers himself to be so easily caught, and he gives a sufficiently lively description of one mode of effecting his capture. It is as follows:—"He who desires to take the woodcock must put on a cloak and gloves, the colour of the dead leaves, and conceal his head and shoulders beneath a (brown) hat, leaving only two small holes to see through. He must carry in his hands two sticks covered with cloth of the same colour, about an inch of the ends of which must be of red cloth, and leaning upon crutches (rather a lame way of proceeding) must advance leisurely towards the woodcock, stopping when the bird becomes aware of his approach. When the woodcock moves on he must follow until the bird stops again without raising its head. The fowler must then strike the sticks together very quickly (moult

bellement) which will so amuse and absorb the woodcock that its pursuer may take from his girdle a rod, to which a horsehair noose is attached, and throw the latter round its neck, for it is one of the stupidest and most foolish birds that are known." I should think so, if it allowed itself to be caught by this tom-foolery.

Of birds which are not stupid, but knavish rather, even to much theft, Belon relates that the magpie is called Margot (the diminutive of Margaret, as Charles the First called his beautiful sister, the wife of Henry of Navarre); and the jay (Richard), each on account of their cry. Being somewhat skinny, the jay is thought rather a tough morsel by those who desire to dine upon him; but he himself eats everything that comes in his way, and is particularly fond of peas—green peas perhaps—at a guinea a pound. The common people think that the jay is subject to the falling sickness, nevertheless they eat him when they find him on the ground. It is, perhaps, a weakness in human nature which cannot be remedied, the tendency to make a meal of everything that has animal life. But for this, how severely might we not animadvert on the gluttony of those who, not remembering their song in spring, devour thrushes in the autumn: yet, that is the best time to eat them, for they are then perfectly delicious as you would say, with me, if you had made a diligence-supper on thrushes travelling through the Ardennes.

But, I fear, if I read any more of Peter Belon's volume, I shall write an article on Gastronomy, a thing I had no notion of when I began. Let me conclude with something more serious than eating—if anything be more serious: let me lament, with all the world, that so useful a man as Peter Belon should have been cut off sadly in the prime of his life and full vigour of his intellect. He was only forty-five years of age when he was murdered one night as he traversed the Bois de Boulogne on his way to Paris; whether for the sake of plunder or revenge is not known.

RHINE-LAND.

We lean'd beneath the purple vine,
In Andernach, the hoary;
And at our elbows ran the Rhine
In rosy twilight glory.

Athwart the Seven-hills far seen
The sun had fail'd to broaden;
Above us stream'd in fading sheen
The highway he had trodden.

His farewell crimson kiss he left
On clouds suffused with blushes:
One star beam'd down the dewberry-cleft
Across the mirror'd flashes.

From cliffs of slate the vintage call'd
In muffled leafage dusky:
And down the river grandly wall'd,
The grape reel'd ripe and husky.

We reach'd entwining hands to seize
The clusters round us glowing:
Our locks were fondled by the breeze
From southern sandhills blowing.

The long-neck'd flask was not unbent,
The globed green glass unemptied;
The god of honest pleasure lent
Young Love his powers, untempted.

Home-friends we pledged; our bridal-maids;
Sweet wishes gaily squander'd:
We wander'd far in faëry glades,
Up golden heights we wander'd.

Like King and Queen in royal bliss,
We paced a realm enchanted,
A realm rose-vista'd, rich from this,
Tho' not from this transplanted.

For this Rome's frontier foot endear'd,
Her armèd heel made holy;
And Ages grey as Time's own beard,
Wreathed it with melancholy.

Old days it has that live in gleams
Of suns for ever setting:
A moth-wing'd splendour, faint as dreams,
That keeps the fancy fretting.

A gorgeous tracing dash'd with gloom,
And delicately dusted:
To grasp it is to spoil its bloom;
'Twas ours because we trusted.

No longer severing our embrace
Was Night a sword between us;
But richest mystery robed in grace
To lock us close, and screen us.

She droopt in stars; she whisper'd fair;
The wooded crags grew dimmer;
The arrow in the lassie's hair
Glanced by a silver glimmer.

The ruin-rock renew'd its frown,
With terror less transparent,
Tho' all its ghosts are hunted down,
And all its knights are errant.

The island in the gray expanse,
We watch'd with colour'd longing:
The mighty river's old romance
Thro' many channels thronging.

Ah, then, what voice was that which shed
A breathless scene before us:
We heard it, knowing not we heard;
It rose around and o'er us.

It rose around, it thrill'd with life,
And did infuse a spirit
To misty shapes of ancient strife:
Again I seem to hear it!

The voice is clear, the song is wild,
And has a quaint transition;
The voice is of a careless child
Who sings an old tradition.

He sings it witless of his power;
Beside the rushing eddies,
His singing plants the tall white tower
Mid shades of knights and ladies.

Against the glooming of the west
The grey hawk-ruins darken,
And hand in hand, half breast to breast,
Two lovers gaze and hearken.

MILVERSTON WORTHIES.

From his sixth year, my brother Davie manifested undeniable symptoms of the divine afflatus, but it was not until fifteen that he commenced his immortal poem, "The Vengeance of Bernardo Caspiato." He was a delicate, pretty, fair boy, with a spiritual countenance, a noble brow, and abundance of silky brown hair; quite the poet to look at, and very like my dear mother, as we all daily observed. It was expected that he would cover the name of Cleverboots with a halo of glory: unlike some families, we were the first to believe in our hero, and the most constant in our faith in his splendid future. At the epoch referred to, Davie began to tie his collar with a black ribbon, to wear his white throat exposed, and his beautiful hair very long; his appetite did not fail him in private, but at our little réunions he always partook of dry toast and strong green tea; was very silent, abstracted, and averse to men's society: the women petted him, and called him "all soul." He was very kind-hearted and sweet-tempered, and rather vain, which was nothing more than natural, considering how he was flattered.

He had a little room at the top of the house which looked over the town to Milverston mere, where the immortal poem was commenced. I remember he began it on a wet evening, and it opened dismally, with a storm; he had me up there with my plain sewing to listen to the first stanzas; and he consulted me about one or two difficult rhymes: he was not sure whether "horror" and "morrow" were correct. I thought not; and, his birthday falling three days after, I presented him with a rhyming dictionary. Subsequently, the poem made rapid progress.

Cousin John had just gone up to London to study law, and my father wished Davie to be articled to Mr. Briggs, the solicitor at Milverston. This did not chime in with his taste at all; he stated that it was his wish to follow the profession of letters. We did not quite understand this at the time. Cousin Jack said it meant that he wanted to be the idle gentleman. I had my doubts on the matter. Davie brought my mother over to his way of thinking. "I shall be very poor, but very happy, mother," he used to say; "if you put me to anything else, I shall be miserable and do no good." So Davie got his own way; and, as a preparation for his profession of letters, he stayed at home and finished "Bernardo Caspiato." It was a splendid work. I have wept over it often. The heroine having been executed for witchcraft, her lover, Bernardo, devotes his life to avenge her; and, after committing a catalogue of murders, ends by disappearing mysteriously in a flash of blue lightning to rejoin her in heaven. My mother objected to the morality of the conclusion; but she acknowledged herself, at the same time, ignorant of the laws and licence of poetry.

With this great work, and some minor pieces of equal if not superior merit, my brother Davie went up to London on foot, with ten pounds in his pocket, and seventeen years of experience on his head. Cousin Jack had taken comfortable lodgings for him at a small baker's shop, kept by a widow woman with a daughter named Lucy. The dear lad wrote us word that he was quite suited, and that, after a few days to look about him, he should carry his immortal poem to a publisher. His hopes were sanguine; his visions of fame magnificent.

To our surprise and grief, Bernardo Caspiato was declined with thanks. Nobody was inclined to publish it unless the author would bear all the expenses. Davie would not suffer my father to do this — he would earn money for himself. We wondered how he could do it; but Cousin Jack lent him a hand, and somebody who had something to do with a newspaper bought his minor pieces. He lived, at all events, by his own exertions. At this time, Lucy began to figure in letters to me marked "private." It would be impossible to give the whole story as therein developed, but I will epitomise it as afterwards heard from his own lips.

He fell enthusiastically in love with Lucy, whose beauty he raved about as ethereal, heavenly, unsophisticated: before I heard of her at all he was evidently far gone in the tender passion; and Lucy had listened so often, and with such a graceful interest, to his literary struggles, that he fancied he had every reason to believe that his affection was returned. One morning, however, all these sunny hopes were rudely dispelled. He had seen once or twice a young man of rustic appearance in the shop, he had also known him to take tea in the back parlour with Mrs. Lawley and her daughter, without attaching any significance to his visits. As Davie sat at breakfast on this particular day, this individual drove to the door in a gig, and was pleasantly received by the landlady. He wore quite a festal appearance, and for the first time a suspicion entered Davie's mind which changed quickly to a certainty. After speaking to Mrs. Lawley for a minute or two, the young man ran out to stop the driver of a waggon loaded with sacks of grain, and, while holding him in talk, the poor poet from the up-stairs window took an inventory, as it were, of his rival's personal graces. He was of a very tall, straight, and robust figure, with a broad, comely face, ruddy complexion, and curly brown hair. His voice was like the roll of an organ, and his laugh the very heartiest of guffaws— altogether, a very proper man, as Davie, but

for his jealousy, must have acknowledged. The stranger's rollicking air of gaiety added present insult to previous injury; and to get out of the hearing of his rich "ha ha," which seemed to pervade the whole neighbourhood, Davie snatched up his hat, intending to walk off his spleen: he pushed halfway down the stairs, but there paused—just below, in the passage by the back-parlour door, was the obnoxious rustic, with his arm round bonny Lucy's waist, and his lips seeking a kiss; while the damsel's hand was put up to shield her cheek, and her tongue was saying, in that pretty accent which lovers never take as truth, "Don't, Tom; please don't!" Tom caught the uplifted fingers, and held them fast till he had taken a dozen kisses to indemnify himself for the delay. Davie, greatly discomfited, retreated to his room, and made cautious surveys before venturing to leave it again. He quite hated Tom, who was a fine, single-minded young fellow, guilty of no greater sin against him than having won blue-eyed Lucy's heart.

When Mrs. Lawley came up-stairs to remove her lodger's breakfast-things, she looked glowing with importance, and, after a short hesitation, confided to him the great family secret—Mr. Tom Burton, of Ravenscroft Farm, had offered for Lucy, and they were to be married that day week. "You'll have seen him, sir, maybe?" said the proud mother; "he's been here as often as twice a-week; and, when I told him it behoved him to stop at home and attend to his farm, he'd tell me that corn would grow without watching; and I soon saw what he meant. So, as Lucy was noways unwilling, I bade 'em have done with all this courting and courting, and get wed out of hand. Perhaps, Mr. David, you'll be so good as go out for the day, and let us have your room for breakfast—or we should be proud of your company, sir."

The poor poet almost choked over his congratulations, but he got them out in a way. Soon after, he saw the lovers cross the street, arm-in-arm, spruced up for the occasion, and looking as stiff as Sunday clothes worn on a week-day always make rustic lovers look—everybody who met them might know what they were. Tom had a rather bashful and surprised expression; as if he were astonished to find himself part owner of such a fresh, modest, little daisy of a sweetheart, and were not quite sure that it was her cottage bonnet just below his great shoulder, for so long as Davie had them in sight he kept looking down into it to make sure Lucy was there. Davie's feelings were almost too much for him, but he made a magnanimous resolve that as Lucy had been so good and attentive to him, he would make her a present, and, that he might endure the deepest pangs, that present should be the wedding dress and bonnet. He went off accordingly, post haste, to a great millinery establishment, and purchased a dove-coloured silk dress, and the most sweetly pretty white bonnet, with orange blossoms, that could be had for money. When Lucy and Tom returned from their walk, he called her up-stairs and presented them to her. She contemplated them with surprised delight, blushing and clasping her hands over them: never was there anything so beautiful.

Davie bade her try the bonnet on, to see how it would fit, and, without an atom of coquetry, she put it on, tied the strings under her chin, and rose on tip-toe to peep at herself in the glass over the chimney-piece.

"I must let" (Lucy was going to say "Tom," but she substituted "mother" instead); "I must let mother see it!" and she ran out of the room, leaving the door open, with that intent. But somebody met her on the stairs, and stopped her for examination. Davie tried to shut his ears, but he could not help hearing that ominous "Don't, Tom; please don't;" though, as balm to his wounded feelings, he also caught the echo of a—what shall I say?—a slap? a box?—what do you call it when a pretty maiden brings her hand sharply in contact with her lover's cheek? Well, no matter—it is a something which always is or ought to be avenged by six kisses on the spot; it was condignly punished in this instance, for Tom lacked modesty even more than French polish. Davie instantly slammed the door, and sat down to compose his feelings by inditing a sonnet on "Disappointed Love." When it was finished—the lines being flowing and the rhymes musical—he felt more placid and easy in his mind; but, before the wedding, he withdrew himself from the house, and went into country lodgings to hide his griefs. In process of time he rhymed himself into a belief that he was the victim of a disappointed passion, the prey of a devouring sorrow; that his heart was a wreck, a ruin, dust, ashes, a stone, dwelling alone; that life was stale, an unfinished tale, a hopeless, joyless pageant: all because blue-eyed Lucy had married Tom Burton of Ravenscroft.

This was the early love-romance which furnished my brother Davie with his cynicism, his similes of darts, flames, and wounds that are scattered everywhere through his verses. Some of the productions of his troubled muse, after he fled to Highgate, shall be quoted. What would have been Lucy's astonishment could she have heard herself apostrophised in such burning numbers! her orbs of sunny blue would have dilated until she would have looked, indeed, a round-eyed Juno. Here is one of Davie's effusions from a little manuscript-book, bound in white vellum, the confidante of his poetical woes at this mournful era:—

Thou hast come like a mist o'er my glorious dreaming,
Thy image stands up 'twixt my soul and the sun!
Oh! why, when youth's noontide of gladness was beaming,
Hast thou darken'd all that it shone upon?

To see thee, to love thee, ay, love thee to madness,
To know that thou ne'er couldst be aught to me!
To leave thee! and read in my spirit's lone sadness,
That the love was all hopeless I centred in thee!

The muse appears at this junction to have been quite troublesome with her declarations. The following was written one evening instead of going to dinner like a Christian gentleman to Uncle Sampson's on Christmas Day. It stands entitled, I Love Thee! and is written with a neatness that says little for its spontaneity :—

I love thee! O, never did summer sea
Greet sunshine more gladly than I greet thee!
Like dew to spring flowers, like stars to dusk night
Art thou with thy glances of liquid light!

I love thee, as only those hearts can love
Whose burning devotion is hard to move!
Life, beauty, and hope, thou art all to me,—
A voice and an echo of melody!"

It seems rather as if sense were made subordinate to sound in some of these lucubrations, but they are not so bad for seventeen. Davie came back to Milverston for a little while at this season, and cultivated his grief, to the great disorder of our regular household. One night he stayed out so late that my father went in search of him and found him by the mere, seeking inspiration from the stars. On this occasion he produced eight more lines, which seem to have been the utmost his muse could bring for that one time. It is called, in the vellum book into which it is carefully transcribed, Tell me, my Heart :—

Tell me, my heart, the reason of thy sadness,
Why peoplest thou thy solitude with dreams?
Why dost thou shun the scenes of mirth and gladness
To find thy echo in the lonely streams?

Alas! my heart, that thy poor love should wander,
Where it can meet with nought but cold disdain!
Sad that its treasures thus my soul should squander
Where it can reap but tears and griefs again!"

Good little Lucy would have been sorry, indeed, if she could have known into what a limbo of anguish Davie was thrown by her marriage; but let us hope, as she might have done, that the best half of the tortures were only fancy. I know he had at the worst an excellent appetite for lamb and asparagus, to which he was very partial. Dear Davie, to read these effusions, tender imaginations may think of him as fine porcelain fractured with the world's hard usage, whereas he is stout and bald, and wears green spectacles. The law does not undertake to deal with poetry composed under false pretences, or many would be the sighing Strephons and doleful Delias brought up for judgment.

Last summer we had Davie at home for a month, and during that time occurred the grand incremation of Bernardo Caspiato. I shall ever regard it as a most cruel sacrifice, and Cousin Jack, who instigated it, as an illiterate character. Davie brought it forth one evening when we three were together, and read parts of it aloud: Jack unfeelingly remarked that it was not like good wine, it did not improve with keeping; that, like fruit plucked immaturely, it was green and tasteless; it had not acquired mellowness and flavor, and if stored up for another twenty years it would not taste better. Davie half coincided with him; but I did not; so grandly majestic as was the march of the lines, so delicate and true the rhymes, so thrilling the noble catastrophe. It exasperated me to see Jack, first yawn to the full extent of his jaws, then snatch the manuscript from Davie, and toss it up to the ceiling, retreating afterwards in feigned fear lest he should be crushed by its leaden fall. An ignoble fate was thine,—immortal Bernardo! Convicted of the respectable sin of dulness—which none pardon—thou wert condemned to be burnt! Davie did not act with undue precipitation; Jack urged an immediate execution, but the poet took a week to consider of it, and many a pang it cost him. Those who have written immortal poems and destroyed them will appreciate his feelings; none else can. Let anybody of experience call to mind the last time he has read through the letters from his first love, just before she was married to somebody else; or the letters from that particular old friend, which it is of no use to keep because he is dead, or you have quarrelled beyond hope of reconciliation, and then some faint idea will be conceived of the poet's sensations at this immolation of his first love, his particular friend, and his pet child—all in one.

It was the summer-season, and warm,—I found it very warm; there was no fire in the grate, and the match-box on the writing-table was empty. Jack supplied the want eagerly from his smoking apparatus, and Bernardo Caspiato shrank into a pinch of tinder. I wept.

"There!" said poor Davie, with a profound sigh, "it took two years to write and two seconds to destroy—just like an eternal friendship, an undying affection, or anything of that kind which half a dozen indiscreet words are at any time enough to annihilate!"

"Have a cigar, old boy; never mind moralising," said Jack, to whom a cigar would be consolation for the death of his grandmother; "have a cigar; the business can't be helped."

"Poor Bernardo!" said Davie, as feelingly as if he spoke of a brother, "poor Bernardo! He gave me many an hour's delightful occupation. I feel as if I had lost a friend to whom I had been in the habit of confiding my sentimental vagaries. I'm not sure that it was right to burn him."

"Have a cigar," reiterated Cousin Jack. Davie accepted the offer with a pensive sigh, put on his green spectacles, and went out for a walk in mournful mood. It is a serious thing

burning immortal poems. Nobody can tell what losses the world has had in that way—nobody!

SCOTCH COAST FOLK.

FOOTDEE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

THE aged lady whose recollections I condense, and combine with my own observations, says:

> Remote, but still distinct, the view appears,
> Thro' the long vista of departed years;

although, towards the conclusion of the American War, the fish town of Footdee was not one of those "green spots on which memory delights to dwell." The town consisted of several rows of low-thatched cottages running from east to west, between the high-road and the harbour, or, as it is called, the tide. During the high spring-tides, the furthest waves came up to the bank of sand on which the ends of the houses were built. Exteriorly, these cottages appeared comfortless enough, as each dwelling fronted the back of its opposite neighbour, and, as in the narrow space between there was a line of dunghills crossed over with spars, upon which were hung lines, bladders, and buoys, intermixed with dried dog-fish and skate. Their interior was not more alluring to a stranger. The earthen-floor was uneven, and sometimes dirty, although generally sanded over of an evening, or at least every Saturday, in preparation for the Sabbath. Upon the wood or rafters which stretched across horizontally from the tops of the walls, was a ceiling of old oars and bits of driftwood. The bare rough walls were not whitewashed. Roof, walls, and rafters were all blackened by smoke from a fire at one end of the cottage, placed upon the floor, and made of turf and sea-weed. Soot-drops—curious black glossy accumulations, formed by a similar process, doubtless, to that which produces stalactites and stalagmites—hung here and there upon the walls, rafters, and roof. These collections of pendulous carbon might have been deemed ornaments, if they had not been signs of defective cleanliness. There was a small window at each side of the door. Under each window was a clumsy black bedstead. There was but one small deal table. There were only two or three chairs, and as many sunkies, or low fixed seats resting upon stakes driven into the floor, to sit upon. Beside the wall opposite the door were seen the requisites of the fishing occupation—lines, creels, murlains, &c. Such were the principal property and furniture visible. There was no press or cupboard; and the only depository for keeping things in was a chest or locker, in which lay the precious stores and the Sunday clothes. The salt-backet, or box, was suspended in the chimney.

Such were the cottages in the eighteenth century. In the first quarter of the nineteenth, the cottages were arranged upon the four sides of squares, with a large open space in the centre; and outside every cottage, upon the walls, hung fish-hakes or wooden triangles for drying haddock. Inside the cottages the walls were occasionally whitewashed; and there was fixed against the wall a series of wooden shelves for the preservation and display of delft and earthenware crockery. There were tea-cups in the cupboard in the corner. The little round table was of pine-deal, but scrubbed into a whiteness by a truly Dutch cleanliness, which made it rival tables covered with a fair white linen cloth. The cruisie, an iron lamp of simple structure, consisting of one cup or ladle, with a narrow lip for the whale-oil and wick, and another cup of broader and larger dimensions, to receive the droppings, hangs in the nineteenth, as in many centuries previously, near the chimney, and produces, Rembrandt-like, lights and shades well worthy of the study of an artist who should wish to rival the Dutch painters of the present day, in the pictures they paint to show the effects of a lamp.

The costumes of the fishers were, and continue to be, peculiar. The elderly men wore broad blue woollen bonnets, coarse blue jackets, and canvass kilts or short trousers. The younger men were rather good-looking, had good-humoured faces, and were smarter in their dress. The women wore caps, the original patterns of which still abound upon the Continent, which did not prevent their features being injured by the weather, and their skins being tanned by the sun. The middle-aged women wore stuff gowns, with large flowered calico wrappers or short gowns, over them. The young girls wore stuff wrappers and petticoats, with their hair either drawn back with a large comb, which reached from ear to ear, or fastened up in a very slovenly and unbecoming manner with a head-dress of red worsted tape. The boys under fifteen were the worst clad. They ran about in tattered old garments of their fathers', a world too wide, and remained in this condition until they were able to earn a more decent covering for themselves. The little children of both sexes were comfortably clad in a simple dress of white plaiding, called a walliecoat, which, with their fair curly heads and rosy cheeks, made them look very pretty, as they paddled in the pools of water, and played with their tiny boats.

In the last century, the fishermen were mostly ignorant of everything unconnected with their own business. Few of them could read, and none of the grown-up people could write. Some of the lads could read and write a little; but as they went to sea in the night, and took their repose in the day, they were not placed in favourable circumstances for the development of the social faculties. No instance of intellectual talent—no single person displaying a tendency towards any art or science—occurred among them. Music

and song, no doubt, contributed to the enjoyment of their merry meetings; but the music was confined to a fiddle, and their collection of songs scarcely extended beyond The Praise of Paul Jones, The Waefu' Ballad of Captain Glen, and the Christmas carol of By South-end. As for the women—toiling, as they were, incessantly—they had no time for mental improvement. But as they grew old they gained practical knowledge and experience. Many of them had a knowledge of simple remedies for curing diseases, which obtained for their prescriptions a preference to those of medical men. Some of them were supposed to be invested with supernatural powers, which made it dangerous to offend them.

I may interpose here a general remark. The superstitions which were sweepingly condemned by the philosophy of the eighteenth century as falsehood and imposture, the philosophy of the nineteenth finds to be true in a sense. Instead of rejecting it in a heap, the student of the present day shakes and washes the rubbish, and separates the grains of truth from it. What, I may be asked, was it true that old fish-crones possessed the powers of witchcraft? I have not a doubt of it. The word witchcraft comes from wiccian, whence witchery, wickedness. It means evil influence. Gifted with the power of reading characters and actions, of seeing consequences and calculating results, and capable of imparting a bias, laying a snare, adapting a temptation, planning a vengeance, or instilling a physical or moral poison; and years give all these powers to malignant intelligence.

Anything may be twisted into stupid or incredible shapes. When affairs did not prosper among the Footdee folk, it was attributed to an evil foot, an "ill fit." Prior to setting out upon any expedition or enterprise, they were careful and particular about the first "fit" they met in the morning. The Scum of the Well was an object of rivalry every New Year's Day morning, Old Style. As the midnight hour approached, and the last moments of the year came on, the women assembled in a solemn group, around the large old draw-well, and scolded and scuffled to decide whose pan or bucket should carry off the first fraught (or first freight). The superstition of the first foot may afford some explanation of the phrase Putting his foot into it. Prior to commencing anything, is it not well to note carefully who may be taking the initiative for evil in it? Is not the first evil foot astir in it a serious thing for any enterprise? As for the scum of the well, is not the energetic housewife who obtains the first supply of the first necessary of life,—water—likely to surpass all rivals in providing for her household? I opine it is only a sort of piety due to our forefathers to guess they were shrewder fellows than we might suppose from our views of their superstition, witchcraft, and sorcery.

Indeed there is something small in the minds which study superstitions only to find in them occasions for indulging the sudden elation of self-glory which Hobbes says is the cause of laughter. Our forefathers inherited a spirit-world of personifications; and we have inherited a mass of philosophical abstractions. Our forefathers inherited a poetical and popular nomenclature, and we express our scientific generalisations in crack-jaw words of Greek and Latin derivation. Ghosts, wraiths, witches, fairies, mermaids and water-kelpies, are personifications which have been covered with ridicule, and undoubtedly there have been an abundance of ridiculous stories told respecting them; but I suspect there is philosophy in them after all. The minds of Coast Folk are peopled from early childhood with spectres belonging to the land, sea, and sky; and no wonder, since, during long centuries, catastrophes have desolated the homes of Coast Folk which have issued mysteriously and terribly from land, sea, and sky. Seven miles from Aberdeen there is a fishing-village which was buried in a sand-storm in one night. Almost every soul of the inhabitants was smothered in the sand-drift, and for many years the spire of the village church alone marked the spot in the hollow treacherous sand-hills. When a boy I was warned by words and looks of horror from approaching the fatal locality where it was thought the wrath of the Almighty had displayed itself so awfully. Several instances have occurred in which all the men of a village have gone to sea, and perished in one night. A boat or a corpse heard of as having been cast ashore on a distant beach, was sometimes the only tidings ever heard of them. Mermaids have frightened many a brave man; and, in several of the monthly magazines published in the last century their existence was as seriously discussed as apparitions of sea-serpents have been in our own day. Andrew Brands saw one. "I recollect Andrew perfectly well. He was a stout man, with a broad good-humoured face, and dark hair, who wore his bonnet upon the back of his head." Occasionally employed as a boatman or pilot, he looked more like a jolly sailor than a sleepy fisherman. One summer day Andrew was found lying insensible on the hill of Torry which faces the sea upon the side of the river Dee, opposite to Footdee. When roused, he spoke confusedly and incoherently. He was thought to be deranged. He was carried to the ferry and rowed home. After several weeks of delirious fever he became low and melancholy, and declined to give any account of his illness. Under medical treatment he recovered, although reduced to a skeleton. The fearful belief spread through the village that Andrew Brands had seen something. When questioned after his recovery, he said in

substance: "I was upon the outlook lying upon my breast, and looking over the top of the rocks, when I saw a creature like a woman sitting upon a stone. She seemed to have something like a white sheet, or grave-clothes wrapped around her. Sometimes she combed her hair, and sometimes she tossed her arms in the air. All her ways were fearsome, and at last she rushed into the sea, and vanished beneath the waves. My heart lap (leapt), I grew blind, and I remember nothing more until I awoke with all my bones sore, and the men lifting me up." The medical theory of his illness, as expounded by his doctor, was, that he had gone out with incipient fever upon him, had fallen asleep in an exposed situation, and the hallucinations of delirium had done all the rest. My informant who remembered him well, maintained he had been unwittingly the Actæon of a bathing Diana at a time when ladies rarely bathed in Scotland, and had been punished by the vengeance of the goddess. Probably, however, an accumulation of foam among the stones of the beach had taken the flickering form of a woman. The white scum would seem to rise up amidst the black stones, and Andrew Brands was frightened by a mermaid because he had never been taught the effects of perspective. Was it in some such way as this that Cytherea herself was seen by the poetic eyes of a fisherman of Cyprus, issuing from the froth of the sea until she was wafted in a shell to the shore by Zephyrus, where the Graces received and adorned her for presentation to the celestials of Olympus?

Extraordinary physical phenomena generally precede extraordinary catastrophes. Everybody has heard of the warning blue lights. During the night which preceded a storm, in which seven men of a seaside village were lost, an aged man, I have been assured, saw seven blue lights passing in solemn procession from the roofs of their cottages towards their grave-yard. He entreated the men to stay at home, and not to go to sea. But they were obstinate, and went. He told some old and some young people, who would listen to him, what he had seen, and had scarcely finished his vaticination when the lightning leaped high into the sky, the thunder pealed, and a hurricane lashed the sea into furious madness. The boats were not far from the shore, but before they could reach it a boat capsized, and seven men were lost within sight of their families. A week afterwards, at the very hour of the day corresponding to the hour of the night of the procession of the blue lights, the funeral procession of the seven fishermen was seen going from their cottages by the very way the lights had gone; and beneath the very spots where the lights stood in the churchyard the corpses rested for evermore. The law of the elders in these villages is, that no boats ought to go to sea when the old men say they have seen the blue lights. The blue lights are possibly electrical facts. The traditions respecting their direction are as variable as the winds. The guess is not a very hazardous one, that science would agree with the old men in warning the fishers against going to sea when the air was charged with electricity after midnight, in the coldest hours of the twenty-four.

When the Footdee fishers were found in the last century to be no more scrupulous than other people respecting custom-house oaths, an oath was framed for them, founded upon their superstitious fears, which proved to be far more effectual than the ordinary one. It concluded with these words: "If I do not speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, may my boat be a bonnet to me."

Of course the fishers leaned to the side of the smugglers against the excise and customs officers. Almost everybody did, in the last century except the lawyers, something of a legal education being necessary to see the propriety of establishing what Adam Smith, while himself a Commissioner of the Board of Customs, denounced as the outposts of Pandemonium. When examined before the courts in smuggling cases, the fishermen contrived occasionally, under an appearance of simplicity, to baffle with considerable cunning the cross-examinations of the counsel for the Crown. Public sympathy was, in those days on the side of the smugglers, who called themselves free-traders, a designation which has since attained universal honour. The principle of obedience to law, the sine quâ non of civilisation, is less easily enthroned upon uneducated consciences than the principle of buying cheap and selling dear. Lairds, merchants, and workmen, therefore, all admired the cool duplicity with which the fishers sometimes evaded the truth when under cross-examinations. Some of them were once witnesses in a case of deforcement. The counsel for the prosecution asked a fisherman,—"While the men were struggling in the water, did you not hear the prisoner call out, 'Drown the dogs?'"

"We saw nae dogs there, sir," was the demure and composed reply.

"I do not ask you what you saw; but, on your oath, did you not hear him call out, 'Drown the dogs?'"

"There was nae ony dogs there, sir," was again the obstinate answer.

Although no man of distinction in science or letters has ever arisen in any of these villages, it cannot be doubted they have produced many men whom Poodle or Doodle might have safely trusted upon his legs on the floor of the House of Commons to answer the questions of honourable and independent members.

A century ago the fishers, who were hardy, industrious, decorous, and honest, were nevertheless inveterate swearers—a fault which I

did not observe among them in an offensive degree in the nineteenth century. Indeed, I have heard more swearing from two admirals in a London club than I ever heard in fishing villages. In the last century, however, the fishers would use the most tremendous oaths upon the most trivial occasions. Anger was not necessary to provoke them; the oaths seeming to be as necessary to the hauling up of a lugger, or the pushing out of a boat, as the cries of "Yo-hee O!" Persons unaccustomed to hear the strong phrases of swearing, feel their minds shocked by the ideas conveyed by them, being ignorant that they have ceased to convey ideas to the persons who use them. When a lady rebuked one of them for using the word deil (devil), he said,

"Eh! mem, I didna think it meant ony ill. Does it mean ony ill? I thocht it was just a word to dad" (knock) "aboot."

The wrath of these good-natured and kind-hearted people was notoriously harmless. Stabs were unknown, and blows rare among them, but the language of their vituperation was expressive and opprobrious. My informant has seen a woman in a passion take up a handful of burning coals, and lay them down without seeming to feel pain. Ladies drilled in the control of their gestures, if not of their feelings, in boarding-schools, witnessed, with great astonishment, the violence with which the women expressed grief and lamentation. The boats were frequently in great danger in crossing the bar, and on these occasions the women assembled upon the beach would tear their hair, clap their hands, and utter piercing cries and shrieks. The simple and natural principles upon which their marriages were formed, the chastity and honour in which the married fishers lived, and the connubial and family happiness of their homes, may explain, in part, the violence of the emotions and the exuberance of the gestures of the wives when their husbands were in danger. A fashionable dame of London related sarcastically that she had known a fisherwoman of the Scotch east coast who required four men to keep her from throwing herself over the rocks when her drowned husband was carried into her cottage, become calm in a fortnight, recommence work in a month, and marry again in a twelvemonth. The poor child of nature had no sentiment!

The marriages of the fishers were as natural and simple as the unions of Isaac with Rebekah and Boaz with Ruth. Perversions about dowries, pin-money, establishments, and settlements, did not interfere with the natural action of mutual interest and honest preference. They married young. The young man and young woman had probably played together in childhood. Running, leaping, tumbling, paddling, laughing, the children of the fishers are as joyous as their fathers are serious; and if their mothers could not match them against the children of the Tuileries' Gardens, or of St. James's Park, in point of pretty costumes, they could challenge the world for them in regard to the healthiness of their respiratory organs and the glee of their animal spirits. The boys and girls soon become useful, the elder children being early employed to nurse the younger. Both boys and girls thus grow up in systematic training for the performance of the duties of their lives.

The boy or lad went out to sea with the men, and worked at the oar until he got enough of money to buy a share of a boat—and a boat with its nets costs from a hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds. When he had a share of a boat, he required some one to bait his lines and sell his fish. Among the girls he knew, and whose tempers he had tested in play, he naturally selected the girl he liked best, and asked her first; and then, perhaps, like Kepler, the great astronomer, he had a list in his mind, and asked one girl after another until he was accepted. On the other hand, it is probable the principles of affinity may sometimes have been in operation for years, and the boat may have been a greater difficulty than the wife. As soon as they were betrothed by the consent and blessings of the old folks, the young woman went to live with her future father and mother-in-law for a week or two, and in the house with the young man. No doubt she had been taught by her own mother to search for bait, to tip and bait the lines, and do all manner of household work; but the fisher-people judged wisely she would be all the better for knowing all her mother-in-law could teach her; and her husband would be likely to think all the more of her for being as clever as his own mother could make her. A few days prior to the marriage, she returned to her father's roof, and the ceremony took place in the house of her childhood. After the ceremony, the young couple went to a house of their own. They went in procession from the paternal to the connubial home. A fiddler playing merry strains, headed the procession, and he was followed by a boat-mate of the bridegroom, carrying the flag of the boat. When the bride arrived before the door of the home of her husband, his boat-mates rolled their flag around her. The spectators witnessed the ceremony in silence until she was enveloped in the folds, and then they applauded the actors in it with loud and long cheers. The ceremony seemed to be a public intimation that the young wife was henceforth placed within the sanctuary of the honour of the crew, who engaged themselves solemnly to protect her from insult and injury, as brave men defend their flag.

When a young couple had not money enough to pay for the share of the boat, the furnishing of the house, and the expenses of the wedding, they had what was called a

penny-wedding. There was nothing royal or aristocratic in a penny-wedding, to which any one might come who chose to pay a shilling. The significance and rationale of the penny-wedding was this: "We are a couple of young people who think it better to marry than to do worse, and we deem it foolish and wicked to begin the world with debt. We therefore invite you, good neighbours, to amuse yourselves by dancing at our marriage, and, by paying as generously as may be convenient for the amusement, help us to begin the world with a fair chance of making both ends meet." A common argument in favour of the penny-wedding was: the young man wants ten pounds of his share of the boat, and many persons gave their money who never went to the dances. The canvas for the penny-wedding took place among the carpenters, coopers, and sailors of the port; and employers, shopkeepers, ship-owners, and captains had generally a half-crown to spare for the young couple. The dinner at a penny-wedding consisted of abundance of meat and Scotch broth, served in broad pewter dishes. After dinner, the party adjourned to the links or downs, to dance "the shame dance;" and then they danced until they were tired. Known bad characters were inexorably excluded, decorum rigorously maintained, and "liberties" would have been indeed dangerous in a community in which every woman lived under the protection of a flag and at least half-a-score of hard fists. A severe critic of propriety would not probably have approved the amount of public kissing at a penny-wedding. Indeed, in this respect, Footdee resembled more the Court of the Neva than the Courts of the Thames or of the Seine; but in regard to the moral essentials of the problem of life, if there be a word of truth in court chronicles, the courtiers and courted of all the three royal rivers might have learned lessons from the Coast Folk of Footdee.

CHIP.

THE CONGRESSIONAL PRIZE-RING.

THE forcible mode in which debates are conducted in the parliament of the United States, and the personal encounters which sometimes follow them, are believed by the present generation, to be novelties and only recently brought to a culminating point by the Honourable Preston S. Brooks's life-preserver, upon the head, face, eyes, and body of Senator Charles Sumner. This is a mistake. Fifty years ago, exciting debates often ended in a regular stand-up fight in the lobby of the House of Representatives. The combatants stripped, a ring was formed, bottle-holders appointed, and the battle fought and reported quite in the style of Moulsey Hurst and Bell's Life in London.

In corroboration of this statement we present to our readers the following paragraph copied from the New York Evening Post of December the thirteenth, eighteen hundred and five, into the Annual Register for eighteen hundred and six:—

On Friday last, the well-known Leib, one of the representatives of Pennsylvania, and the leader of the Duane party, and Joseph H. Nicholson, one of the representatives of Maryland, met in the Congress lobby about one o'clock, when Leib immediately called Nicholson a liar; and, thereupon, commenced one of the best fought battles recorded in the annals of congressional pugilism. The fight continued till the sixty-fourth round, when Leib had received such blows as deterred him from again facing his man. He protracted the fight; falling after making a feeble hit. In the round which ended the fight, those who backed him advised him to resign; which he did after a combat of one hour and seventeen minutes. The combatants were both very much beaten.

CHARLES THE FIFTH'S GLOVE.

THERE are few foreign trips, for English holiday-makers, that answer better than a run into Belgium. Belgium is easily got at, and easily left. Its features are varied and not vast. You can explore its interior, inspect its circumference, and take the whole of it in, without being tired. It is a pocket kingdom. Instead of wearing your patience, as France does, when you are in a hurry to get from one end of it to the other, you can dart across it with the ease of a swallow skimming over the Isle of Wight. Moreover, Belgium is rich in matters of interest considerably beyond the proportions of its size. It gives you the idea of an originally extensive country, which has been subjected, like an ungainly truss of hay, to hydraulic pressure. For its area, it feeds a very large population. The district of St. Nicholas, near Ghent, carries five thousand two hundred and ten souls per square league—the space required, in savage life, for the maintenance of a single individual. The large towns lie so close together, that, as soon as you have done with one, by entering a railway carriage you are landed in another in two, three, four, or five quarters of an hour.

A lovely May morning blesses, with its lucky omen, our approach to the frontier. All nature smiles as we glide along. The orchards are bedecked in white, pink, and green. Get ready your tubs, O cyder-drinkers, the apple-trees promise you a plentiful supply! Remember, however, that there's many a slip between the apple-blossom and the lip. The sower strides over the well-powdered earth with measured step, and with white apron heavily laden. "Take that, old lady," he mentally exclaims, as each handful is scattered, "and give me fifty-fold back again." The cows in the meadows lie basking in the sun, with

their feet doubled under them. They are chewing the cud, to give the grass a short respite, and to allow it a little time to grow in peace. The homesteads are overtopped by clumps of poplars, whose young and maidenly leaves blush ruddy pink at the touch of the sunbeam. On the skirts of the forest are prudent oaks, who are waiting till the blackthorn winter is over, before they put on their summer fashions. Along the road which crosses our railway come Flemish wagons, like triumphal cars in the processions of Ceres, and not of Bacchus, but of the twin gods Baccy and Beer. And so we rush over a flat fertile land, till we pass Roubaix, a wilderness of bricks and mortar. Tourcoing also, and ditto; both very rural in their aspect for manufacturing towns, and with atmospheres that Bradford and Leeds might envy. At Mouscron, we are safely over the border. The custom-house officers, I suppose, are ordered to ascertain whether new arrivals are personally cleanly in their habits; for, as soon as they have inspected my oiled-silk sponge-bag, my comb, and my bit of soap (which latter they don't supply you with at inns), they tell me I may lock up our baggage again. It is too bad that they should rumple Mademoiselle's muslin-dress, with which she intends to make a sensation, into a wisp, and should further annoy her by calling her Ma'ame; but they are not a bad set of fellows on the whole, nor wanting in a certain cordiality of manner. They look at my passport, enter it in their book, and then bid me good morning by name, as if they had known me for the last ten years. They are Flemings, no doubt. You may know a Flemish man or woman by the friendly vocatives with which they interlard their conversation. Mon ami or mon cher ami is ever on their lips, while addressing you. "What are you looking for, my friend?" asked a market-woman, whom I had never in my life seen before—unless, perhaps, twenty years ago, when she must have been a little girl. "I want half a hundred cauliflower plants," I replied.—"Ah, my dear friend, you won't find that for another fortnight. But you'll come and see me again in another fortnight; you'll come to me for them, won't you, my dear friend?"

Returned once more to our railway carriage, a change has come over the spirit of our journey. We lose the red-legged soldiery of France, exchanging them for others with grey and pepper-and-salt continuations. The military, too, are men of taller stature, with more flesh upon their bones. Generally, the Belgians feed better than the natives of the north of France, and show it in their personal appearance. Piebald or rusty-brown monks and nuns flutter about and read their breviaries in greater profusion. Belgium is still a monastic stronghold of brotherhoods and sisterhoods; and the clergy are struggling hard for an increase of power.

The aspect of the country from Mouscron to Ghent is ever rich and highly cultivated. The crops are mostly grown in ridges, with deep furrows between them, indicative of a strong clayey loam, but wet. Of wood, as in France, little is to be seen compared with England, except where congregated into forests. Here and there are a few plantations of Scotch firs, set very thick, to spindle them up for poles and railings.

Railway travelling is cheaper (by something like a third), than in France, and, consequently much cheaper than in England; children under eight years of age pay half-price; under three, and in arms, nothing; but certainly the article you get for your money is inferior in quality to that furnished by the first-named country. In France every traveller is allowed sixty pounds (French) of luggage gratis, independent of his small personalities; in Belgium none at all. Whatever you do not take into the carriage with you, such as a carpet-bag or basket of moderate weight, has to be paid for in addition to your ticket. The first-class carriages are handsome and comfortable, but small. The third class chars-à-bancs are open at the sides, exposed to the wind, the rain, and the snow, which sometimes rake them fore and aft; in inclement weather, they are not fit to carry sheep and cattle, much less human beings. Dogs in Belgium pay third-class fare, but are snugly stowed away in a baggage-wagon. In one of these locomotive pens for men, women, and tender children, a fat hog might have his health seriously injured as the consequence of a long day's journey.

The State is the sole proprietor of nearly all the Belgian railways; and while it paternally confers on its subjects the benefit of cheap circulation and traffic, it might also modify an arrangement which is no other than unfeeling, and is deficient in that humanity which a government ought to exercise towards all under its protecting sway, without reference to wealth or rank. The second-class carriages are tolerable, with stuffed seats and a little horizontal stripe of stuffing to ease the back, and ladies may travel in them; but they are of scant dimensions, very naked inside, and unprovided with any hooks for hats or caps, or with receptacles for sticks and umbrellas. The seats are fancifully arranged with a sort of passage left between them, to give the means of stepping from one to the other, as if you were occupying a little parlour; but the result is no addition to comfort. The signal for starting is given, not by the whistle of the engine, but by a little musical flourish, a tir-ely, consisting of three notes, blown on his bugle by the conductor of the train. Of the officials, general civility and obliging behaviour is the rule. The passengers' luggage department would be improved by assimilation with the system adopted in France. But nations are often like wilful

children; they are determined to have a way of their own, for the sake of having it. They refuse to attend to good advice, because it is counsel given by another; and they persist in some evidently inconvenient mode of doing things, merely to show that they are independent agents, and that they can and will follow their own devices.

Ghent, with its hundred thousand inhabitants and its considerable trade, has still the air of a town half-asleep, as if you had caught it yawning and stretching at half-past three on a summer's morning. Its extent is much exaggerated in the current printed descriptions. Charles the Fifth's time-honoured pun—"I could put Paris into my Gand" (that is, my glove)—is apocryphal and highly improbable. If you doubt it, mount the tower of the beffroi. People who lose their way in a labyrinth of lanes, always fancy they have travelled over an enormous area. Now, the map of Ghent puts you in mind of a Medusa's head, or of the clustered worms that are taken out into the country, on a sultry day, to participate in the pleasures of a fishing party. Buy a map of Ghent, colour the streets blue, the river Escaut yellow, the river Lys red, and you will have a faithful representation of the famous Gordian knot, if you happen never to have seen one before. I long wandered about the streets of Ghent, trying to find the city, and could not. It is a town made up of bits of west-ends, Faubourg St. Germains, and fashionable suburbs, with no heart or kernel to it—no Cheapside, no Ludgate Hill, no Rue de Rivoli, no Rue St. Honoré. There is a slight recovery of suspended animation in the Marché-aux-Grains and the Rue des Champs; but the pulse, even there, beats very feebly. The market tries (when it is not market-day) to manifest its vitality in an unhealthy, spasmodic way, by book-stalls of amatory literature, over which a little censorship would be no great tyranny. In the street, to enter a fashionable lace and embroidery shop, we had to ring at the glass-door, as if it had been a private house. After waiting, while the lady up-stairs gave a touch of arrangement to her cap and her hair, we were duly admitted to make our purchase, much in the style of a morning call. Elsewhere, in the modern quarters, you see unbroken lines of large, handsome, well-painted houses, hybrids between a palace and a ladies' boarding-school. Business may be transacted therein, but it is done in the quietest possible way. You see dentelles (lace), or calicots (calicos), engraved on a neat brass-plate on a house-door, as if some private individual,—Monsieur Dentelles, or Madame Veuve Calicots,—were living there on their property, in great state and dignified retirement. The older portions of the town are decorated with houses built before the window-tax was born or thought of,—with quaint, pointed gable ends, as if a child had been trying to cut fancy conic sections out of a red brick wall. But in whatever direction you wend your way, you can't go twenty steps without crossing a bridge. For the convenience at once of the land-carriage and the canal navigation, these are swing bridges; often you have to wait while a barge, laden perhaps with vegetable mould for the pot-plants in training by one of the Vans,—Van Houtte, Van Schaffelt, or Van Geert,—intercepts the passage. The time is not exactly lost, because it allows you to stare about you without rudeness. But soon, the bridge-swinger takes his toll from the barge, which he collects by means of a wooden shoe at the end of a string fastened to a fishing-rod; the isthmus of planks is then replaced, and resounds with the pattering of gros sabots. Certainly, the popular costume is droll, in its extremes. At top, the women wear a close-worked cottage hat of straw, with three dabs of blue ribbon stuck on behind; at foot, they are garnished with masses of hollow timber, which must be a serious drain on the Belgian forests. But hats worn by women at the same time with sabots, are, in French eyes, or in eyes accustomed to France, as utterly anomalous a combination as a fish-tailed mermaid, or a man-headed centaur are considered, on cool reflection, by Professor Owen. Conspicuous in the air rise the portly towers of St. Nicholas, St. Michel, and St. Bavon, around which, and the lofty houses, multitudinous swifts, whirl and scream, in delight at the abundance of their insect game. The canals are propitious to the propagation of gnats. Where is the carcase, there are the vultures; and where are the gnats, there flock the swifts.

That the quietude of the town is more apparent than real, and that busy life is going on within, is plain from the Belgian fashion of sticking looking-glasses outside the houses, at angles (sometimes they glance in three directions) which allow the inmates to catch a glimpse of passers-by, without being seen themselves. "Au Nouveau Miroir," (the new looking-glass) is occasionally used as the sign of an inn. The mirrors are generally on a level with the first-floor; and a smaller one receives the rays it reflects straight from the entrance door; so that Not at home is easily responded to the inquiries of a dun, or worse, a bore. It is not one city alone which adopts the system of quicksilvered peepers; nor is the custom new, but was probably first introduced by peculiarities of historical and political situation. In Belgium, it has not always been convenient to open the door to every new-comer.

"If you please, monsieur," we politely ask, "have the goodness to tell us which is the way to the Botanic Garden?"

"N'entends Français," is the reply, accompanied by a disclamatory shake of the head. It is a reminder that the Flemish tongue is master here, in actual fact, if not by legal right.

Even the government is obliged to come to a compromise, and affix the names of the streets to their corners both in Flemish and in French. The railway porter, who handed us our luggage, was deaf and dumb as far as we were concerned, and signed us over to a brother medium. The coachman who drove us to our inn just comprehended the words "Hôtel de Flandre"—and a capital and recommendable hotel it is—but he comprehended no more of the further clever remarks addressed to him. Many of the Gantois who do speak French manage it so badly, and are so decidedly not at home in it, that you feel quite delighted at your own superiority to them, born Belgians though they be. But Flemish has so close a relationship to our own vernacular, that the names of trades over the shops, the bills, and the public notices, are as amusing to read as it is to hear a foreigner speak broken English. Drap Straet is Cloth, or Draper's Street. One man sells alle soorte of wares; another offers you cart-grease under the name of wagen smeer; kelder te huren is cellar to hire; kamer te huren is chamber to hire. A koperslager is a coppersmith. Professions which require no interpreter are the bakker, the matte-maeker, the timmerman, the apotheker en drogiste, and the boekhandlaer. The three grand literary elements are announced for sale as pennen, inkt, en papier. If your family is small, you may be content with securing Een Huis to let; but should you be expecting a large and sudden increase, you had better engage Twee Huyzen, if adjacent. In the Apelmerkt, you could hardly mistake the fruit that is sold there. When thirsty, you may go and drink a glass of dobbel-bier at the hospitable sign of De Roose; or you may prefer to patronise the Oliphant (without a castle), or the Bruyn Visch,—that is to say, the Red Herring. Good little boys and girls punctually attend a zondagschool. Booksellers' windows invite you to the perusal of Flemish novels; such as Een Zwanenzang (a swan's song), by Jan Van Beers, and De Zending der Vrow (Woman's Mission), by Hendrik Conscience.

"How triste, how sad it is for you not to be able to speak Flemish!" ejaculated a dame who sold goeden drank, but who could not, though she would, converse with me. In such cases, it rarely strikes the tongue-tied Flemings belonging to the portion of society below the middle-class, that they are like the fox who was minus a tail. They are content with, and would have other people learn, a language which confines them, as tightly as a tether fastens a cow, to a few score square leagues of the earth's vast superficies. But a striking point in Flemish popular manners, is the forming themselves into bands and societies. These little close corporations are perhaps, in some degree, the result of their narrowly-diffused tongue. And so the blue-bloused archers of one town go and shoot against the black-capped long-bows of another, distant a quarter-of-a-day's pedestrian journey; the chorus-club of Schoutenhoul will pay a fraternal visit to the orpheonists of Raspenscraep. In the French army, the French Flemings hang together like bees at swarming-time. Here at Ghent, the workmen, even at leisure hours and meal-times, form themselves into companies. Young people, both girls and boys, run together in distinct and closely-grouped herds, like flocks of young lambs at the same age. One would think that babies in Flanders came all at once, in falls, in imitation of the lambing season with Southdowns and Leicesters.

But the Botanic garden—where is it? Let us first look at our map, and then at the corner of the street, and endeavour to pilot our way thither. In Belgian towns, generally, if you use your eyes with the slightest expression of inquiring curiosity, up starts a phantom before you, like a most impertinent Jack-in-the-box, calling himself a commissionaire, but who must not be confounded with a superior being, the French commissionaire. Where these creatures come from, I cannot tell. They suddenly appear before you, as if the air had curdled itself into human form. Peep into a shop window, and you have one at your elbow; gaze up at a steeple, and, when you look down, you will find a commissionaire between your legs; turn the angle of a street, on a walk of discovery, and round the corner you knock your nose against a commissionaire. They start from behind doors, down staircases, out of cellars, from the dark mouths of narrow lanes; and I believe that, upon inquiry, they would be found now and then to drop from the roofs. They follow you about with the hungry look of a beast of prey, regarding you as the game on their preserve, and themselves as very forbearing to spare you a little while. I do not say that no respectable man exercises the calling of commissionaire; but, whenever such jewels are found, they ought to be set in sterling gold. In age, they vary from sixteen to sixty. They deal in cigars, and have often a select female acquaintance. They are mostly seedy in garment, cloudy in complexion, uncleanly in person, offensive in breath, jargonic in speech, forward in manner, and given to drink. Commissionaires attach themselves to every hotel, as leeches hang to the side of their vessel, ready to fix on anything that has blood or money to yield; and these consider themselves the head of their profession. But there are wandering commissionaires who prowl about the streets, willing to make themselves useful in any way—too useful, at times, many people might think.

One fellow, who pleaded his large family at home, and whom I took for an hour or two to get over the ground more quickly,

disappeared every time we came to anything that required more than a minute to examine. Each disappearance had for its object the injection of a dram into his weakly stomach, which relieved me from listening to his account of the lions. But, after a little unsteadiness, he tripped and tumbled on the ground, and concluded by running into an iron post with a violence that must have done serious damage to the post. I confess to a prejudice against Belgian commissionaires, and never employ them when I can help it. They attack you in the very churches. "You won't leave the cathedral without paying the concièrge," was the parting remark of a young commissionaire whose services I persisted in declining; and, while hunting for the Botanic garden, I can't proceed without interruption, but am obliged to say to a person who continually crosses my path, "I have already told you three times I do not want you. Cannot you take an answer, and leave me to myself?"

The garden, when found at last, is a painful instead of a pleasurable sight, and must be far from gratifying to the citizens of Ghent. It is a warning to avoid, and not an example to follow, as all botanic gardens ought to be. The hardy perennials are the only plants in good condition; among these is a remarkable Andromeda arborea. The enormous carp, rising and sinking in their pond, are a lingering remnant of former prosperity. In the houses, dirt, dust, thrips, scale, red spider, and aphis, threaten to get the upper hand, and to establish their dynasty on a permanent footing. A fine Doum palm, in a handsome but filthy cage of glass, excites pity by its wretched want of comfort. Other unhappy captives, lank and lean, bald and mangy, beg hard for some one to have compassion on them. There are many noble specimens in a deplorable way.

Two small-leaved standard myrtles, in boxes, cannot be less than a hundred and fifty or two hundred years old. Their trunks measure thirteen or fourteen inches in circumference; it would be difficult to find many such in Europe. A leading English nurseryman has endeavoured to get them across the water; it is a pity he cannot, for they would be properly cared for here. There are many other far-from-every-day myrtles, which the head of the establishment seems trying hard to kill. He is the Celestine Doudet of greenhouse evergreens; his pupils do not thrive; his oleanders are in the last stage of suffering. The alleged excuse is, want of sufficient accommodation and hands; but when a thing is to be done, it is not a bad plan to do it yourself. Had I such handsome orange trees, so neglected, so begrimed with soot, I would get up at three in the morning, and, in my shirt-sleeves, with an apron on, with a bucket of soapsuds and a sponge in hand, would mount an A ladder and work away, day after day, till the task was done. But are there no such things as garden engines in Ghent? A Victoria, in a tank, contrives to wash itself partially, though tattered and torn about the leaves; but it is not clear what business a pit of pine-apples has in a place for study, where scantiness of room is complained of. One plant, or two, are all right and proper, but a botanical lecturer does not want a crop of anything.

Near the entrance of the garden stands a vase, conspicuously mounted on a pedestal, in which grows what the official who did the honours was pleased to point out as a rose-bush grafted on an oak-tree. I shook my head in disgust at the falsehood. "Look," he insisted, "the stem is an oak-stem, the side branches are covered with oak-leaves, and the central twig is the rose which has been grafted in the middle. You can see that its leaves are rose-leaves, can't you?—and it is full of buds coming into flower."

"No, no; it is only a trick," I answered, without apologising for flatly contradicting him. "You have perforated the stem of the oak from the root to the top; through the tube thus made you have inserted the stem of a rooted rose-bush; but there is no union between the two, like the junction of a scion with the stock. It grows independently in the earth, as the oak-plant does, although encased within it; and you call that grafting a rose on an oak, which I am gardener enough to know to be impossible."

"Ah! you know that. You have found it out. And yet, many people, when they see this specimen, go away persuaded that we have succeeded in grafting a rose on an oak."

I made no further remark than my looks expressed; but I thought that botanic gardens were instituted for the teaching of accurate information and useful facts, and not to mislead ignorant persons and to propagate error. An educational establishment, subsidised partly by the government and partly by the town, forgets its duties when it blazons forth a charlatanism which would upset the principles of vegetable physiology and stultify the hard-earned acquirements of science.

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A DISH OF FROGS.

THE general opinion with respect to frogs appears to be, that they were created solely for the purpose of experiment; to be galvanised, poisoned, and otherwise scientifically ill-treated by philosophers; or to be swallowed alive, made to hop against their inclinations, or be pelted to death by irreverent schoolboys. Whatever the process—useful, amusing, or simply cruel—the result is always the same: the frogs invariably get the worst of it. This is hard measure to deal out to any class of animals; but, when a race so inoffensive as that of the Anourous Amphibia or Tailless Batrachians, is always selected for victimisation, the injustice of the act demands more than common censure. It is my intention, then, to put in a plea for frogs, as lively, intelligent, graceful, handsome, eatable creatures; whose merits, to my thinking, have not been sufficiently appreciated by the world at large.

Few naturalists knew better than M. de Lacepède what those merits are, and you shall hear what he says about them:—"The frog," he observes, "is as agreeable in its conformation as distinguished by its qualities, and interests us on account of the phenomena which it presents at the different periods of its life. . . . We see in it an animal from which we have nothing to fear, whose instinct is refined and which, uniting slim and supple limbs with a slight form, is adorned with colours that please the eye, and exhibits tints rendered still more brilliant by a viscous humour which is spread over the skin, and answers the purpose of a varnish"—polished, in fact. In another place he says:—"The figure of the frog is light, his movements rapid, and his attitude graceful." On this last point M. de Lacepède strongly insists:—"When a frog leaves the water, so far from moving with his face turned towards the earth and basely wallowing in the dirt, like a toad, he advances by lofty leaps. One would say that he desires to associate himself with the air, as the purest element; and when he rests on the ground, he always does so with his head erect and his body raised upon his fore-feet, an attitude which gives him the upright appearance of an animal whose instincts have in them something noble, rather than those which belong to the low, horizontal position of a vile reptile."

That frogs have in them qualities which are out of the common is indisputable, or why should Homer have sung their battles, or Aristophanes have made them the principal personages in one of his best known comedies? Why, also, if they were not lively and intelligent should the epithet Frog be applied to our gallant French friends? There is a much better reason for it, believe me, than the fact of their being articles of diet in France; for the southern German consumes a far greater number at table than the Gaul; teste the Frog-market (Froschmarkt) at Vienna, and nobody in their senses ever thought of calling the Viennese either lively or intelligent!

Frogs, in the course of their career, have a dual existence, as befits animals who live alike on land and in water. In the tadpolian stage they belong entirely to the latter element; advanced to positive froghood, they are equally at home in the pond or the meadow, preferring the ditch, perhaps, as a mezzo termine between the two. There is much about the tadpole that is interesting. Look at his figure—how round! what an image of easy-going softness! what can you distinguish of him in particular, unless it be his long, flexible tail—that tail which he repudiates in after-life, as it has been held by Lord Monboddo that we ourselves have done? Which is his head, which his capacious stomach? Some say he is all head—others all belly. The French naturalists, who must be great authorities on the question, evidently incline to the latter opinion, by the name they give him, which is têtard. I rather imagine the former to be the fact from the enormous quantity of food he absorbs. "The little being," says Cuvier, "which issues from the frog's egg calls itself têtard. It is provided, in the first instance, with a long, fleshy tail, and a small horny beak, and has no other apparent members beyond the small fringes at the sides of the neck." "The mouth of the têtard," remarks De Lacepède, "is not placed, as in the adult frog, in front of the head, but in some sort in the chest: thus, when he wishes to seize anything that floats on the surface of the water, or to breathe more freely, he throws himself on his back

like a shark, and he executes this manœuvre so rapidly that the eye follows it with difficulty."

But beyond the operation of eating, it must be admitted that the tadpole does not lead a life of any very great activity. He makes up for this quiescence, however, when his metamorphosis is accomplished, and from a state of supine flatness, which the Germans express by the word Kaulplatte, he emerges into that vigorously-endowed animal, called by the Dutch in their descriptive language a Kikvorsch. There never was change more complete. Even the magic of the Treasury Bench does not effect a greater, for the tadpoles who swarm towards that haven of bliss generally remain tadpoles to the end of the chapter.

Behold our friend, then, to use a scientific definition, under the aspect of the "true frog." He kicks off his old garments, like the clown in the pantomime, and throwing himself into an attitude, says—with a slight huskiness in his voice—"Here I am! Rana!" This is the generic designation of his tribe, equally applied to the heavy-going toad,—more properly called Bufo, which aptly expresses his puffy condition—though between the appearance of the two there is as much difference as we see in a high-mettled racer and a Suffolk punch. As a tadpole, he was a vegetarian, but being a frog, he knows better; animal food is what he now goes in for, and that there may be no mistake about it, he swallows everything whole—not, as may be supposed, from sheer voracity, but on account of the quickness and impatience of his nature, which cannot afford to wait. The smartest frog in this line, is the tree-frog (Hyla), of whom Dr. Shaw says,—"In the beauty of its colours, as well as in the elegance of its form (this bears out my original impression) and agility of its movements, the tree-frog exceeds every other species. Its principal residence during the summer months, is in the upper parts of trees, where it wanders among the foliage in quest of insects, which it catches with extreme celerity, stealing softly towards its prey, in the manner of a cat towards a mouse, and when at the proper distance, seizing it with a sudden spring, frequently of more than a foot in height."

The tree-frog, you see, has no time to be fastidious about cookery, but makes the most of his opportunity, an example which, if always followed by mankind, might not be altogether amiss. Observe how he profits by it: "It often suspends itself by its feet, or abdomen, to the under part of the leaves, thus continuing concealed beneath their shade." But although the tree-frog is the fastest of his family, none of them are open to the reproach of being slow. Look at their length of leap in comparison with their size. In this respect, indeed, there is one variety, the Clamorous Frog of North America—a noisy fellow, in all probability, always annexing his neighbour's property,—who hops five or six yards at a stretch; he is brilliantly arrayed, having ears of shining gold, —from California!

To give full expression to his vocal organs (which the envious call clamour) is as much the nature of the frog as to develop the muscular capabilities of his finely formed limbs. He figures alike in opera and ballet. The Hyla, for instance, indulges in a shrill treble; the Rana typhonica, or hurricane frog, has a fine baritone voice, which he exercises in rapid passages on the approach of tropical storms; and the bull-frog, the Lablache of the troupe, has a bass that you may hear for miles: it is almost worth while—if anything could compensate for the journey in other respects—to make a voyage to the United States, and go to the swamps near the Mississipi, to hear what a noise the bull-frog can make; though a good listener might, perhaps, identify him by his voice all across the Atlantic.

The intermediate varieties of ululation characteristic of the Tailless Batrachians, belong rather to the toad than the frog; but, to illustrate the range of the voice amphibious, I may mention what the former can do. There is one toad,—the Rana pipa,—whose flute-like falsetto notes indicate a perfect voce di testa; and the Rana musica has a soprano (it is said) which Calzolari—if he were a toad —might covet. Your toad, however, can emit other sounds. There is the Rana bombina, or laughing toad, found in the fenny parts of Germany and Switzerland, who, in addition to the advantage of being able to leap (or dance) like a frog, utters a clear sound exactly like that of a man laughing.

There is the Rana ridibunda, or jocular toad, found in the rivers that empty themselves into the Caspian, which never ventures on dry land, is very large, weighing frequently more than half-a-pound, and whose voice in the evening (probably when he has been drinking, though certain persons assert that neither toads nor frogs drink at all) expresses extreme hilarity. What the toads have to laugh at, except each other, is a social phenomenon which I am quite unable to explain.

The frog proper can also do something with his voice besides sing; the Rana temporaria, or common frog, possesses the ability of making a noise by night, the naturalists say, "like that of an angry man." Very likely he is angry; no snails for supper, perhaps, or his bed not quite damp enough. Pliny —who always will have his say—enlightens us as follows with respect to the frog's harmonious utterance: "Frogs have their tongues in the forepart fast to the mouth, the hinder part within, towards the throat, is free and at libertie, whereby they keep that croaking which we hear at one season of the yeare, and then they bee named Olalygones; for at that time they let down their nether

lip somewhat under the water, that they gargell with their tongues levell to the water, which they receive into their throat; and so while the tongue quavereth withal they make that croaking noise abovesaid. He that would looke then advisedly upon them, should see their specks so swolne, and stretched out full, that they will shine again: he should perceive their eyes ardent and fiery with paines that they take them with the water." With one or two points of difference this description would apply to a principal operatic tenor as well as to a Batrachian. Neither the frog's song nor that of the "first tenor" is altogether for his own amusement; he has a purpose of utility in the exercise of his voice, and you can meet with no surer indication of coming rain than the announcement made by the Hyla; who may be looked upon as a living barometer—more especially the male which, if kept under a glass and supplied with proper food, will infallibly foretell a change from dry weather to wet.

I am a little surprised that De Lacepède, who, as I have shown, is quite alive to many of the fine points in a frog's nature, should disparage the frog's voice in the manner he does. "If frogs," he observes, "are to hold a distinguished rank among the oviparous quadrupeds it is certainly not on account of their voices; for, in proportion as they please by the agility of their movements and the beauty of their colours, they annoy us by their hoarse croaking. Nature certainly never intended them to be the musicians of our fields." This, however, is a mere matter of taste, and perhaps M. de Lacèpede had himself what is called a voice, and was afflicted with the pangs of professional jealousy. Of the other faculties with which the frog family are endowed, we are told that "their taste is probably not at all acute;" acute enough, however, to enable them to select the most tempting morsels; for M. de Lacepède expressly says, they reject everything that at all assumes an approach to decomposition ("Elles rejettent tout ce qui pourrait présenter un commencement de décomposition.") We are informed that "their sense of smell would seem to be almost rudimentary," and that in them "touch, properly, so called, can hardly exist in a high state of development;" but, as a set-off to these alleged imperfections, they are wonderfully quick of sight and hearing. Those gold-encircled eyes and golden ears were not given them for nothing.

There are, of course, endless varieties of the frog-tribe. The most beautiful, perhaps, is that description of Hyla, called, by Cuvier, La Rainette bicolore, celestial blue on the back and rose-coloured beneath ("bleu céleste en dessus, rosée en dessous"); this is a native of South America. Another of the South American tree-frogs, La Rainette à tapirer (R. tinctoria; 'the dyer") possesses the singular property of imparting its colour to the feathers of birds. "The blood of this frog," says De Lacepède, "impregnated into the skin of parroquets at the places where their feathers have been pulled out, causes red or yellow feathers to appear, and produces that tuft which is called tapiré. This frog is of a brownish hue with two white streaks crossing the back in two places." Without venturing to doubt this statement, I merely wish to ask, who it is that commences the operation of grafting that ends in dyeing? A third South American Hyla, called "Couleur de Lait" (milk frog) is as white as snow, with spots here and there somewhat less dazzling; the stomach is marked with "ash-coloured stripes." A fourth American Hyla is called "La Fluteuse" (the flute-player) from its melodious croaking (qui coasse mélodieusement!); its cry, unlike that of its European brethren, denotes the approach of dry weather. Surinam—rich in amphibia—produces a different kind of bicolored frog; it is blue and yellow (like a new number of the Edinburgh Review); the Rana paradoxa, or paradoxical frog (possibly a reviewer in his own way) is also to be found there. Styria is the habitat of the Rana Alpina, or black frog; in the island of Lemnos, La Bossue or humpbacked frog is found; in North America, the Rana squamigera or scaly frog (very scaly); and if Lamarck the naturalist could have proved his position, there would have been another frog such as the world has not seen since the days of the Antediluvian Batrachians. His was the development theory, adopted and enlarged by the more modern and mysterious author of the Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation:—the notion that one being advances in the course of generations to another, in consequence merely of its experience of wants calling for the exercise of certain faculties in a particular direction, by which exercise, new developments of organs take place, and end in variations sufficient to constitute a new species. On this principle he presumed that a frog transported to the sandy plains of tropical Africa might, by dint of gasping and elonguting the cervical process, become a giraffe. It would have been difficult to imagine a more striking metamorphosis; except the development of a tadpole into a man—a belief to which some recent philosophers seriously incline.

Of all the bonâ-fide frogs known, the most estimable, beyond a doubt, is the Rana esculenta, or edible green frog. Of this species, the distinctive characteristics are, that it is of an olive colour, spotted with black, with three yellowish lines on the back; the abdomen whitish, the limbs elegantly marked with black bands. It is the largest of the European frogs, and furnishes many a treat to the gourmands of France, Germany, and Italy.

It was in the last-named country that the preparation of frogs for food led to one of the

most remarkable discoveries of the last century. The story is well known, but will bear repeating here. The wife of Galvani, the experimental philosopher, being in a declining state of health, employed as a restorative a soup made of frogs. Several of these animals, ready skinned for use, happened to lie on a table near the electrical machine in the laboratory. While the machine was in action, an attendant chanced to touch with the point of a scalpel the crural nerve of one of the frogs that lay not far from the prime conductor, when it was observed that the muscles of the limb were instantly thrown into violent convulsions, and the discovery of galvanism was the result of the accident. However fortunate this discovery for mankind, the frogs have no great reason to rejoice in it; for, ever since, they have been, as I observed in the outset of this paper, the selected victims of experiments. I have mentioned the Signora Galvani's soup. That was not her discovery; for the diet has been known time out of mind. In one of the Ayscough MSS. in the British Museum (it is a treatise "On the prolongation of life," of the time of Elizabeth or James the First), frog-broth is thus described by a quaint old gentleman who marshalled his recipes in the shape of letters addressed to various friends: "Frog broath. Sr your viperes" (he had already given the receipt for viper-broth) "being taken off from board, give mee leave to present you wh. a supernumerarie dish of frog-broath: you will either receive it and taste of it as a raritie, or as an antidote, for the ancients held it of soveraine force to help thosse whom venemous creatures had stung. Ælius and Paulus commend their broath with salt and oile in such poisonous bitings. I have knowne some that have drunke it, and eaten the flesh of them boiled and fried, troubled afterwards with such vehement vomiting that they suspected themselves poisoned" (No great inducement this with the friend to whom the "frog-broath" was recommended). "In Fraunce I once, by chance, eate them fried, but thought they had bein another meate, otherwise I had not bin so hastie. But it might bee that thosse were frogs from standing-pooles and marshes: palustres ranas venendas credidit Ælius. But bee they of what sort you will, I think penurie made some use them, and luxurie others, whose fat feeding and wanton stomacks crave unnaturall things, mushrups, snailes, &c. For my parte, I would interdict them altogethere, especiallie seeing for gaine the seller mixes any kind of them, rubetas et mutas ranas, wh. without doubt are poison, and some have observed that mosse frogs, which when they are flead of a white colour, are more hurtful. Over fondnesse makes us take aniething, al mixtures of herbes in sallets. And as I have heard, some Italian merchants at Antwerp, to have more varietie than others in them, unwittingly mixed the seeds of aconite, and al that eate that sallet died."

To explain the word Rubetas in the foregoing letter, recourse must be had to Pliny, who says, "The venomous frogs and todes called Rubetæ, live both on land and also in water." But, in truth, the esculent frog, whether served in broth, stewed with a sauce velouté, or fried in batter, is a very dainty dish. Poor Benson Hill, who wrote a capital Diary of Good-living, used to commend them highly. "With due reverence," he observes, "for the noble sirloin, I cannot but think that the hind-legs of some half-dozen good-sized frogs, taken out of a fine crystal pool, fried with an abundance of cream and parsley, well crisped, would make a convert of the most bigoted John Bull, provided you did not tell him the name of the dish until he had accustomed himself to its flavour."

The objection to frogs as an article of diet is, indeed, a mere prejudice on the part of those who have never eaten them. In what respect are they worse than eels? The frog who swallows young birds and ducklings is surely as clean a feeder as the snake-like creature that dines on dead dogs, and makes the celebrity of the ait at Twickenham. Or is a frog less savoury than a rat? And yet what a price was paid for rats at the siege of Kars! If the garrison could only have been supplied with lots of frogs—literal or metaphorical—the Russians would never have taken the place. Again, does a snail—the large escargot, which people are so fond of in Paris—appear more tempting than a frog? Or that animal picked out of its shell with a pin, and called, in vulgar parlance, a winkle? "Away, then," as indignant orators say,—"away, then, with this cant of false-delicacy and squeamishness, and the very first opportunity you have, O lector fastidiose! order A Dish of Frogs. They are quite as good as whitebait, when assisted by a flask of Rhenish."

The anonymous gentleman, whose letter I quoted above, spoke of the frog as an antidote against poison, and referred to the belief entertained by the ancients in this respect. The works of the old writers, indeed, abound in frog-phylacteries. Hear Pliny (through the medium of Philemon Holland): "The decoction of sea-frogs sodden in wine and vinegre, is a soveraigne drinke for all poisons, but especially for the venom of the hedge-toad and salamander. As for the froggs of rivers and fresh-waters, if a man either eat the flesh or drink the broth wherein they were sodden, he shall finde it verie good against the poison of the sea-hare (What animal is that?), or the sting of the serpents above-named; but more particularly against the pricke of scorpions they would bee, boiled in wine. Moreover, Democritus saith, that if a man take out the tongue of a frog alive (the old story, cruelty), so that no other part thereof stick thereto, and after he hath let

the frog go againe into the water (and spoilt his singing), apply the said tongue unto the left pap of a woman whiles she is asleepe, in the very place where the heart beateth, shee shall answer truly and directly in her sleepe to any interrogatione or question that is put to her." I rather think, when this fact becomes generally known, that frogs' tongues will be at a premium, unless there be some other device for eliciting the true expression of a lady's mind. "But," continues Pliny, "the magicians tell more wonders than so of the frogs, which, if they be true, certes froggs were more commodious and profitable to a commonwealth than all the positive written laws that we have; for they would make us beleeve, that if the husband take a frogg, and spit him, as it were, upon a reed—" with other processes—conjugal infidelity is henceforward a thing no longer to be feared. Other marvels are also performed by frogs, if Pliny's authorities are to be credited: "Some froggs there bee that live onely among bushes and hedges, which thereupon wee call by the name of Rubetæ, and the Greeks term them Phrynos—the biggest they are of all others, with two knubs bearing out in their front, like horns, and full of poyson they bee. They that write of these toads strive a-vie who shall write most wonders of them; for some say that if one of them be brought into a place of concourse, where people are in great numbers assembled, they shall all be husht, and not a word among them. They affirme also, that there is one little bone in their right side, which, if it be thrown into a pan of seething water, the vessel will coole presently, and boil no more, until it be taken forth againe. Now this bone (say they) is found by this means: if a man take one of these venomous frogs or toads, and cast it into a nest of ants, for to be eaten and devoured by them, and looke when they have gnawed away the flesh to the verie bones, each bone one after another is to be put into a kettle seething upon the fire, and it will be soon knowne which is the bone, by the effect aforesaid. There is another such like bone (by their saying) in the left side. Cast it into the water that hath done seething, it will seem to boil and waulme againe presently. This bone (forsooth) is called Apocynon. And why so? Because ywis there is not a thing more powerful to appease and represse the violence and furie of curst dogs than it. They report, moreover, that it inciteth unto love; and yet, nathelesse, if a cup of drinke be spiced therewith, it will breed debate and quarrels among those that drinke thereof. . . . Othere there be who are of opinion that if it bee but worne about one, either hanging to the necke or fastened unto any other part of the bodie, enfolded within a little piece of new lamb's-skin, it will cure a quartan ague or any other fever besides. Moreover, they bear us in hand, that the milt of these toads is a counterpoison against their own venome; but the head is much more effectuall." Let oculists consider the next paragraph: "Take the right eye of a frogg, lap it within a piece of selfe-russet cloth (such is made of blacke wooll as it came in the fleece from the sheepe), and hang it about the neck; it cureth the right eye, if it be inflamed or bleared. And if the left eye be affected, do the like by the contrarie eye of the said frogg, &c." All frogs, however, are not such perfect medicines. "A little frog there is, delights to live most amongst grass, and in reed plots; mute the same is, and never croaketh, greene also of colour. If kine or oxen chance to swallow one of them down with their grasse, it causeth them to swell in the bellie, as if they were dewe-blowne." Still, as the poet says, "None are all evil," ex. gr.: "And yet (they say) that if the slime or moisture wherewith their bodies be charged outwardly, bee scraped off with the edge of some pen-knife, it cleareth the sight, if the eyes bee anointed therewith. As for the flesh itself, they lay it upon the eyes to mitigate their paine. Furthermore, some there are who take fifteen froggs, pricke them with a rist, and draw the same through them that they may hang thereto, which done, they put them into a new earthern pot, and the humour or moisture that passeth from them in this manner, they temper with the juice or liquor which, in manner of a gum, issueth out of the white vine brionie, wherewith they keep the eyelids from having any haires growing upon them. . . . Meges, the chyrurgian, devised another depilatorie for to hinder the growing of haires, made of froggs which hee killed in vinegre, and permitted them (how kiud!) therein to putrefie and dissolve into moisture; and for this purpose his manner was to take many fresh froggs, even as they were engendered in any rain that fell during the autumn." As periapts, spells, and charms, frogs were never kept in the back-ground while a belief in witchcraft obtained credence, and their occult virtues were as highly lauded by the adepts as their simply medicinal properties. The witches' cauldron wanted some of its most stimulating ingredients if the component parts of frogs were absent from it, and "Syr Cranion," as the frog was called, held a high place in the esteem of those deluding and deluded dames.

It would not, perhaps, raise "a party" very highly in the esteem of a regular sportsman if the former were to state, that the rod and line and other fishing apparatus with which he sallied forth some fine morning in June were provided solely for the purpose of catching frogs! And yet this species of angling finds great favour in France. I remember once to have witnessed the sport on a very extensive scale at a country house in the Chartrain. It was at the Château of Villebon, near Courville, a place that had once belonged to the Grand Sully, and had

passed, at the time of the first French revolution, from the ancient house of D' Aubépine into the hands of a rich contractor who had done his best to make it habitable. Amongst other appliances, he kept a great deal of company, the old château affording room enough for a host, and on my arrival there (in such a crazy old patache from Chartres) I was surprised, as I crossed the drawbridge, to see a bevy of gay ladies in pink and blue bonnets and parasols of the same hue, seated on chairs upon the turf with fishing-rods in their hands, angling in the moat. That the sport was entertaining there could be no doubt, for shouts of laughter broke forth at every moment, gentlemen ran to-and-fro in a state of wild excitement, and now and then a very gentle scream was heard, as if some dangerous animal had come into closer proximity with one of the fair anglers than was thought desirable.

"What fish have you here?" said I to the driver of the patache, who was a stable-boy at the château.

"Fish!" he replied, with a grin, "there are no fish here!"

"What, then, are these ladies and gentlemen angling for?"

"Frogs, sir." ("La Chasse aux grenouilles, monsieur.")

And this I found was the constant morning's amusement of the guests at Villebon. It was much of a piece with the sport which, in the afternoon, the gentlemen used to take in the woods—shooting foxes! respecting which I once asked a gaitered and gunned chevalier what he did with his game when he had bagged it.

"O!" said he, carelessly, "we keep the skin and the tail" (fancy his saying tail, and not brush!) "for muffs, and give the little animal" (la petite bête) "to the peasants to eat. They are fond of foxes in these parts."

The party at the château also ate their game, which they caught quite secundum artem. M. de Lacepède says, "There are various ways of fishing for frogs: they are sometimes caught in nets by the light of torches, which frighten them and deprive them of motion, or with a hook and line, the bait being worms or insects, or simply a bit of red cloth. In Switzerland," he adds, "they rake them out of the water."

But neither the French nor the Swiss are the monopolists of frog-fishing. Dampier relates that the practice prevails in the kingdom of Tonquin. "I was invited," he says, "to one of these New Year feasts, by one of the country, and accordingly went ashore, as many other seamen did upon like invitations. I know not what entertainment they had, but mine was like to be but mean, and therefore I presently left it. The staple dish was rice, which I have said before is the common food; besides which, my friend, that he might better entertain me and his other guests, had been in the morning a-fishing in a pond not far from his house, and had caught a huge mess of frogs, and with great joy brought them home as soon as I came to his house. I wondered to see him turn out so many of these creatures into a basket; and, asking him what they were for, he told me to eat! But how he dressed them I know not: I did not like his dainties so well as to stay and dine with him."

Depend upon it, honest Dampier lost a great treat.

THE DIARY OF ANNE RODWAY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1840. March 12th (continued). After I had pawned my things, and had begged a small advance of wages at the place where I work, to make up what was still wanting to pay for Mary's funeral, I thought I might have had a little quiet time to prepare myself as I best could for to-morrow. But this was not to be. When I got home, the landlord met me in the passage. He was in liquor, and more brutal and pitiless in his way of looking and speaking than ever I saw him before.

"So you're going to be fool enough to pay for her funeral, are you?" were his first words to me.

I was too weary and heart-sick to answer—I only tried to get by him to my own door.

"If you can pay for burying her," he went on, putting himself in front of me, "you can pay her lawful debts. She owes me three weeks' rent. Suppose you raise the money for that next, and hand it over to me? I'm not joking, I can promise you. I mean to have my rent; and if somebody don't pay it, I'll have her body seized and sent to the workhouse!"

Between terror and disgust, I thought I should have dropped to the floor at his feet. But I determined not to let him see how he had horrified me, if I could possibly control myself. So I mustered resolution enough to answer that I did not believe the law gave him any such wicked power over the dead.

"I'll teach you what the law is!" he broke in; "you'll raise money to bury her like a born lady, when she's died in my debt, will you! And you think I'll let my rights be trampled upon like that, do you? See if I do! I give you till to-night to think about it. If I don't have the three weeks she owes before to-morrow, dead or alive, she shall go to the workhouse!"

This time I managed to push by him, and get to my own room, and lock the door in his face. As soon as I was alone, I fell into a breathless, suffocating fit of crying that seemed to be shaking me to pieces. But there was no good and no help in tears; I did my best to calm myself, after a little while, and tried to think who I should run

to for help and protection. The doctor was the first friend I thought of; but I knew he was always out seeing his patients of an afternoon. The beadle was the next person who came into my head. He had the look of being a very dignified, unapproachable kind of man when he came about the inquest; but he talked to me a little then, and said I was a good girl, and seemed, I really thought, to pity me. So to him I determined to apply in my great danger and distress.

Most fortunately I found him at home. When I told him of the landlord's infamous threats, and of the misery I was in in consequence of them, he rose up with a stamp of his foot, and sent for his gold-laced cocked-hat that he wears on Sundays, and his long cane with the ivory top to it.

"I'll give it him," said the beadle. "Come along with me, my dear. I think I told you you were a good girl at the inquest—if I didn't, I tell you so now. I'll give it to him! Come along with me."

And he went out, striding on with his cocked-hat and his great cane, and I followed him.

"Landlord!" he cries the moment he gets into the passage, with a thump of his cane on the floor. "Landlord!" with a look all round him as if he was king of England calling to a beast, "come out!"

The moment the landlord came out and saw who it was, his eye fixed on the cocked-hat and he turned as pale as ashes.

"How dare you frighten this poor girl?" said the beadle. "How dare you bully her at this sorrowful time with threatening to do what you know you can't do? How dare you be a cowardly, bullying, braggadocio of an unmanly landlord? Don't talk to me—I won't hear you! I'll pull you up, sir! If you say another word to the young woman, I'll pull you up before the authorities of this metropolitan parish! I've had my eye on you, and the authorities have had their eye on you, and the rector has had his eye on you. We don't like the look of your small shop round the corner; we don't like the look of some of the customers who deal at it; we don't like disorderly characters; and we don't by any manner of means like you. Go away! Leave the young woman alone! Hold your tongue, or I'll pull you up! If he says another word, or interferes with you again, my dear, come and tell me; and, as sure as he's a bullying, unmanly, braggadocio of a landlord, I'll pull him up!"

With those words, the beadle gave a loud cough to clear his throat, and another thump of his cane on the floor—and so went striding out again before I could open my lips to thank him. The landlord slunk back into his room without a word. I was left alone and unmolested at last, to strengthen myself for the hard trial of my poor love's funeral to-morrow.

March 13th. It is all over. A week ago, her head rested on my bosom. It is laid in the churchyard now—the fresh earth lies heavy over her grave. I and my dearest friend, the sister of my love, are parted in this world for ever.

I followed her funeral alone through the cruel, bustling streets. Sally, I thought, might have offered to go with me; but she never so much as came into my room. I did not like to think badly of her for this, and I am glad I restrained myself—for, when we got into the churchyard, among the two or three people who were standing by the open grave, I saw Sally, in her ragged grey shawl and her patched black bonnet. She did not seem to notice me till the last words of the service had been read, and the clergyman had gone away. Then she came up and spoke to me.

"I couldn't follow along with you," she said, looking at her ragged shawl; "for I hav'nt a decent suit of clothes to walk in. I wish I could get vent in crying for her, like you; but I can't; all the crying's been drudged and starved out of me, long ago. Don't you think about lighting your fire when you get home. I'll do that, and get you a drop of tea to comfort you."

She seemed on the point of saying a kind word or two more, when, seeing the Beadle coming towards me, she drew back, as if she was afraid of him, and left the churchyard.

"Here's my subscription towards the funeral," said the Beadle, giving me back his shilling fee. "Don't say anything about it, for it mightn't be approved of in a business point of view, if it came to some people's ears. Has the landlord said anything more to you? No, I thought not. He's too polite a man to give me the trouble of pulling him up. Don't stop crying here, my dear. Take the advice of a man familiar with funerals, and go home."

I tried to take his advice; but it seemed like deserting Mary to go away when all the rest forsook her. I waited about till the earth was thrown in, and the man had left the place—then I returned to the grave. Oh, how bare and cruel it was, without so much as a bit of green turf to soften it! Oh, how much harder it seemed to live than to die, when I stood alone, looking at the heavy piled-up lumps of clay, and thinking of what was hidden beneath them!

I was driven home by my own despairing thoughts. The sight of Sally lighting the fire in my room eased my heart a little. When she was gone, I took up Robert's letter again to keep my mind employed on the only subject in the world that has any interest for it now. This fresh reading increased the doubts I had already felt relative to his having remained in America after writing to me. My grief and forlornness have made a strange alteration in my former feelings about his coming back. I seem to have lost all my

prudence and self-denial, and to care so little about his poverty, and so much about himself, that the prospect of his return is really the only comforting thought I have now to support me. I know this is weak in me, and that his coming back poor can lead to no good result for either of us. But he is the only living being left me to love, and—I can't explain it—but I want to put my arms round his neck and tell him about Mary.

March 14th. I locked up the end of the cravat in my writing-desk. No change in the dreadful suspicions that the bare sight of it rouses in me. I tremble if I so much as touch it.

March 15th, 16th, 17th. Work, work, work. If I don't knock up, I shall be able to pay back the advance in another week; and then, with a little more pinching in my daily expenses, I may succeed in saving a shilling or two to get some turf to put over Mary's grave—and perhaps even a few flowers besides, to grow round it.

March 18th. Thinking of Robert all day long. Does this mean that he is really coming back? If it does, reckoning the distance he is at from New York, and the time ships take to get to England, I might see him by the end of April or the beginning of May.

March 19th. I don't remember my mind running once on the end of the cravat yesterday, and I am certain I never looked at it. Yet I had the strangest dream concerning it at night. I thought it was lengthened into a long clue, like the silken thread that led to Rosamond's Bower. I thought I took hold of it, and followed it a little way, and then got frightened and tried to go back, but found that I was obliged, in spite of myself, to go on. It led me through a place like the Valley of the Shadow of Death, in an old print I remember in my mother's copy of the Pilgrim's Progress. I seemed to be months and months following it, without any respite, till at last it brought me, on a sudden, face to face with an angel whose eyes were like Mary's. He said to me, "Go on, still; the truth is at the end, waiting for you to find it." I burst out crying, for the angel had Mary's voice as well as Mary's eyes, and woke with my heart throbbing and my cheeks all wet. What is the meaning of this? Is it always superstitious, I wonder, to believe that dreams may come true?

* * * * *

April 30th. I have found it! God knows to what results it may lead; but it is as certain as that I am sitting here before my journal, that I have found the cravat from which the end in Mary's hand was torn! I discovered it last night; but the flutter I was in, and the nervousness and uncertainty I felt, prevented me from noting down this most extraordinary and most unexpected event at the time when it happened. Let me try if I can preserve the memory of it in writing now.

I was going home rather late from where I work, when I suddenly remembered that I had forgotten to buy myself any candles the evening before, and that I should be left in the dark if I did not manage to rectify this mistake in some way. The shop close to me, at which I usually deal, would be shut up, I knew, before I could get to it; so I determined to go into the first place I passed where candles were sold. This turned out to be a small shop with two counters, which did business on one side in the general grocery way, and on the other in the rag and bottle and old iron line. There were several customers on the grocery side when I went in, so I waited on the empty rag side till I could be served. Glancing about me here at the worthless-looking things by which I was surrounded, my eye was caught by a bundle of rags lying on the counter, as if they had just been brought in and left there. From mere idle curiosity, I looked close at the rags, and saw among them something like an old cravat. I took it up directly, and held it under a gas-light. The pattern was blurred lilac lines, running across and across the dingy black ground in a trellis-work form. I looked at the ends: one of them was torn off.

How I managed to hide the breathless surprise into which this discovery threw me, I cannot say; but I certainly contrived to steady my voice somehow, and to ask for my candles calmly, when the man and woman serving in the shop, having disposed of their other customers, inquired of me what I wanted. As the man took down the candles, my brain was all in a whirl with trying to think how I could get possession of the old cravat without exciting any suspicion. Chance, and a little quickness on my part in taking advantage of it, put the object within my reach in a moment. The man, having counted out the candles, asked the woman for some paper to wrap them in. She produced a piece much too small and flimsy for the purpose, and declared, when he called for something better, that the day's supply of stout paper was all exhausted. He flew into a rage with her for managing so badly. Just as they were beginning to quarrel violently, I stepped back to the rag-counter, took the old cravat carelessly out of the bundle, and said, in as light a tone as I could possibly assume—

"Come, come! don't let my candles be the cause of hard words between you. Tie this ragged old thing round them with a bit of string, and I shall carry them home quite comfortably."

The man seemed disposed to insist on the stout paper being produced; but the woman, as if she was glad of an opportunity of spiting him, snatched the candles away, and tied them up in a moment in the torn old cravat. I was afraid he would have struck her before

my face, he seemed in such a fury; but, fortunately, another customer came in, and obliged him to put his hands to peaceable and proper uses.

"Quite a bundle of all-sorts on the opposite counter there," I said to the woman, as I paid her for the candles.

"Yes, and all hoarded up for sale by a poor creature with a lazy brute of a husband, who lets his wife do all the work while he spends all the money," answered the woman, with a malicious look at the man by her side.

"He can't surely have much money to spend, if his wife has no better work to do than picking up rags," said I.

"It isn't her fault if she hasn't got no better," says the woman, rather angrily. "She's ready to turn her hand to anything. Charing, washing, laying-out, keeping empty houses—nothing comes amiss to her. She's my half-sister; and I think I ought to know."

"Did you say she went out charing?" I asked, making believe as if I knew of somebody who might employ her.

"Yes, of course I did," answered the woman; "and if you can put a job into her hands, you'll be doing a good turn to a poor hard-working creature as wants it. She lives down the Mews here to the right—name of Horlick, and as honest a woman as ever stood in shoe-leather. Now then, ma'am, what for you?"

Another customer came in just then, and occupied her attention. I left the shop, passed the turning that led down to the Mews, looked up at the name of the street, so as to know how to find it again, and then ran home as fast as I could. Perhaps it was the remembrance of my strange dream striking me on a sudden, or perhaps it was the shock of the discovery I had just made, but I began to feel frightened without knowing why, and anxious to be under shelter in my own room.

If Robert should come back! O, what a relief and help it would be now if Robert should come back!

May 1st. On getting in-doors last night, the first thing I did, after striking a light, was to take the ragged cravat off the candles and smooth it out on the table. I then took the end that had been in poor Mary's hand out of my writing-desk, and smoothed that out too. It matched the torn side of the cravat exactly. I put them together, and satisfied myself that there was not a doubt of it.

Not once did I close my eyes that night. A kind of fever got possession of me—a vehement yearning to go on from this first discovery and find out more, no matter what the risk might be. The cravat now really became, to my mind, the clue that I thought I saw in my dream—the clue that I was resolved to follow. I determined to go to Mrs. Horlick this evening on my return from work.

I found the Mews easily. A crook-backed dwarf of a man was lounging at the corner of it smoking his pipe. Not liking his looks, I did not enquire of him where Mrs. Horlick lived, but went down the Mews till I met with a woman, and asked her. She directed me to the right number. I knocked at the door, and Mrs. Horlick herself—a lean, ill-tempered, miserable-looking woman—answered it. I told her at once that I had come to ask what her terms were for charing. She stared at me for a moment, then answered my question civilly enough.

"You look surprised at a stranger like me finding you out," I said. "I first came to hear of you last night from a relation of yours, in rather an odd way." And I told her all that had happened in the chandler's shop, bringing in the bundle of rags, and the circumstance of my carrying home the candles in the old torn cravat, as often as possible.

"It's the first time I've heard of anything belonging to him turning out any use," said Mrs. Horlick, bitterly.

"What, the spoilt old neck-handkerchief belonged to your husband, did it?" said I at a venture.

"Yes; I pitched his rotten rag of a neck-'andkercher into the bundle along with the rest; and I wish I could have pitched him in after it," said Mrs. Horlick. "I'd sell him cheap at any rag-shop. There he stands, smoking his pipe at the end of the Mews, out of work for weeks past, the idlest hump-backed pig in all London!"

She pointed to the man whom I had passed on entering the Mews. My cheeks began to burn and my knees to tremble; for I knew that in tracing the cravat to its owner I was advancing a step towards a fresh discovery. I wished Mrs. Horlick good evening, and said I would write and mention the day on which I wanted her.

What I had just been told put thought into my mind that I was afraid to follow out. I have heard people talk of being light-headed, and I felt as I have heard them say they felt, when I retraced my steps up the Mews. My head got giddy, and my eyes seemed able to see nothing but the figure of the little crook-back man still smoking his pipe in his former place. I could see nothing but that; I could think of nothing but the mark of the blow on my poor lost Mary's temple. I know that I must have been light-headed, for as I came close to the crook-backed man, I stopped without meaning it. The minute before, there had been no idea in me of speaking to him. I did not know how to speak, or in what way it would be safest to begin. And yet, the moment I came face to face with him something out of myself seemed to stop me, and to make me speak, without considering before-hand, without

thinking of consequences, without knowing, I may almost say, what words I was uttering till the instant when they rose to my lips.

"When your old neck-tie was torn, did you know that one end of it went to the rag-shop and the other fell into my hands?" I said these bold words to him suddenly, and, as it seemed, without my own will taking any part in them.

He started, stared, changed colour. He was too much amazed by my sudden speaking to find an answer for me. When he did open his lips it was to say rather to himself than me:

"You're not the girl."

"No," I said, with a strange choaking at my heart. "I'm her friend."

By this time he had recovered his surprise, and he seemed to be aware that he had let out more than he ought.

"You may be anybody's friend you like," he said brutally, "so long as you don't come jabbering nonsense here. I don't know you, I don't understand your jokes." He turned quickly away from me when he had said the last words. He had never once looked fairly at me since I first spoke to him.

Was it his hand that had struck the blow?

I had only sixpence in my pocket, but I took it out and followed him. If it had been a five-pound note, I should have done the same in the state I was in then.

"Would a pot of beer help you to understand me?" I said, and offered him the sixpence.

"A pot ain't no great things," he answered, taking the sixpence doubtfully.

"It may lead to something better," I said.

His eyes began to twinkle, and he came close to me. Oh, how my legs trembled!—how my head swam!

"This is all in a friendly way, is it?" he asked in a whisper.

I nodded my head. At that moment, I could not have spoken for worlds.

"Friendly, of course," he went on to himself, "or there would have been a policeman in it. She told you, I suppose, that I wasn't the man?"

I nodded my head again. It was all I could do to keep myself standing upright.

"I suppose it's a case of threatening to have him up, and making him settle it quietly for a pound or two? How much for me if you lay hold of him?"

"Half." I began to be afraid that he would suspect something if I was still silent. The wretch's eyes twinkled again, and he came yet closer.

"I drove him to the Red Lion, corner of Dodd Street and Rudgely Street. The house was shut up, but he was let in at the Jug-and-Bottle-door, like a man who was known to the landlord. That's as much as I can tell you, and I'm certain I'm right. He was the last fare I took up at night. The next morning master gave me the sack. Said I cribbed his corn and his fares. I wish I had!"

I gathered from this that the crook-backed man had been a cab-driver.

"Why don't you speak," he asked suspiciously. "Has she been telling you a pack of lies about me? What did she say when she came home?"

"What ought she to have said?"

"She ought to have said my fare was drunk, and she came in the way as he was going to get into the cab. That's what she ought to have said to begin with."

"But, after?"

"Well, after, my fare by way of larking with her, puts out his leg for to trip her up, and she stumbles and catches at me for to save herself, and tears off one of the limp ends of my rotten old tie. 'What do you mean by that, you brute,' says she, turning round as soon as she was steady on her legs, again, to my fare. Says my fare to her, 'I means to teach you to keep a civil tongue in your head. And he ups with his fist, and—— What's come to you, now? What are you looking at me like that, for? How do you think a man of my size was to take her part, against a man big enough to have eaten me up? Look as much as you like, in my place you would have done what I done—drew off when he shook his fist at you, and swore he'd be the death of you if you didn't start your horse in no time."

I saw he was working himself into a rage; but I could not, if my life had depended on it, have stood near him, or looked at him any longer. I just managed to stammer out that I had been walking a long way, and that, not being used to much exercise, I felt faint and giddy with fatigue. He only changed from angry to sulky, when I made that excuse. I got a little further away from him, and then added, that if he would be at the Mews entrance the next evening, I should have something more to say and something more to give him. He grumbled a few suspicious words in answer, about doubting whether he should trust me to come back. Fortunately, at that moment, a policeman passed on the opposite side of the way, he slunk down the Mews immediately, and I was free to make my escape.

How I got home I can't say, except that I think I ran the greater part of the way. Sally opened the door, and asked if anything was the matter the moment she saw my face. I answered, "Nothing! nothing!" She stopped me as I was going into my room, and said,

"Smooth your hair a bit, and put your collar straight. There's a gentleman in there waiting for you."

My heart gave one great bound—I knew

who it was in an instant, and rushed into the room like a mad woman.

"Oh, Robert! Robert!"

All my heart went out to him in those two little words.

"Good God, Anne! has anything happened? Are you ill?"

"Mary! my poor, lost, murdered, dear, dear Mary!"

That was all I could say before I fell on his breast.

May 2nd. Misfortunes and disappointments have saddened him a little; but towards me he is unaltered. He is as good, as kind, as gently and truly affectionate as ever. I believe no other man in the world could have listened to the story of Mary's death with such tenderness and pity as he. Instead of cutting me short anywhere, he drew me on to tell more than I had intended; and his first generous words, when I had done, were to assure me that he would see himself to the grass being laid and the flowers planted on Mary's grave. I could have almost gone on my knees and worshipped him when he made me that promise.

Surely, this best, and kindest, and noblest of men cannot always be unfortunate! My cheeks burn when I think that he has come back with only a few pounds in his pocket, after all his hard and honest struggles to do well in America. They must be bad people there when such a man as Robert cannot get on among them. He now talks calmly and resignedly of trying for any one of the lowest employments by which a man can earn his bread honestly in this great city—he, who knows French, who can write so beautifully! Oh, if the people who have places to give away only knew Robert as well as I do, what a salary he would have, what a post he would be chosen to occupy!

I am writing these lines alone, while he has gone to the Mews to treat with the dastardly, heartless wretch with whom I spoke yesterday. He says the creature—I won't call him a man—must be humoured and kept deceived about poor Mary's end, in order that we may discover and bring to justice the monster whose drunken blow was the death of her. I shall know no ease of mind till her murderer is secured, and till I am certain that he will be made to suffer for his crimes. I wanted to go with Robert to the Mews; but he said it was best that he should carry out the rest of the investigation alone; for my strength and resolution had been too hardly taxed already. He said more words in praise of me for what I have been able to do up to this time, which I am almost ashamed to write down with my own pen. Besides, there is no need—praise from his lips is one of the things that I can trust my memory to preserve to the latest day of my life.

May 3rd. Robert very long last night before he came back to tell me what he had done. He easily recognised the hunchback at the corner of the mews by my description of him; but he found it a hard matter, even with the help of money, to overcome the cowardly wretch's distrust of him as a stranger and a man. However, when this had been accomplished, the main difficulty was conquered. The hunchback, excited by the promise of more money, went at once to the Red Lion to enquire about the person whom he had driven there in his cab. Robert followed him, and waited at the corner of the street. The tidings brought by the cabman were of the most unexpected kind. The murderer—I can write of him by no other name—had fallen ill on the very night when he was driven to the Red Lion, had taken to his bed there and then, and was still confined to it at that very moment. His disease was of a kind that is brought on by excessive drinking, and that affects the mind as well as the body. The people at the public-house called it the Horrors. Hearing these things, Robert determined to see if he could not find out something more for himself, by going and enquiring at the public-house, in the character of one of the friends of the sick man in bed up-stairs. He made two important discoveries. First, he found out the name and address of the doctor in attendance. Secondly, he entrapped the barman into mentioning the murderous wretch by his name. This last discovery adds an unspeakably fearful interest to the dreadful catastrophe of Mary's death. Noah Truscott, as she told me herself in the last conversation I ever had with her, was the name of the man whose drunken example ruined her father, and Noah Truscott is also the name of the man whose drunken fury killed her. There is something that makes one shudder, something fatal and supernatural in this awful fact. Robert agrees with me that the hand of Providence must have guided my steps to that shop from which all the discoveries since made took their rise. He says he believes we are the instruments of effecting a righteous retribution; and, if he spends his last farthing, he will have the investigation brought to its full end in a court of justice.

May 4th. Robert went to-day to consult a lawyer whom he knew in former times. The lawyer much interested, though not so seriously impressed as he ought to have been, by the story of Mary's death and of the events that have followed it. He gave Robert a confidential letter to take to the doctor in attendance on the double-dyed villain at the Red Lion. Robert left the letter, and called again and saw the doctor, who said his patient was getting better, and would most likely be up again in ten days or a fortnight. This statement Robert communicated to the lawyer, and the lawyer has undertaken to have the public-house properly watched, and the hunchback (who is the most important witness) sharply looked after for the next fortnight, or longer if necessary.

Here, then, the progress of this dreadful business stops for awhile.

May 5th. Robert has got a little temporary employment in copying for his friend the lawyer. I am working harder than ever at my needle to make up for the time that has been lost lately.

May 6th. To-day was Sunday, and Robert proposed that we should go and look at Mary's grave. He, who forgets nothing where a kindness is to be done, has found time to perform the promise he made to me on the night when we first met. The grave is already, by his orders, covered with turf, and planted round with shrubs. Some flowers, and a low headstone, are to be added to make the place look worthier of my poor lost darling who is beneath it. Oh, I hope I shall live long after I am married to Robert! I want so much time to show him all my gratitude!

* * * * *

May 20th. A hard trial to my courage to-day. I have given evidence at the police-office, and have seen the monster who murdered her.

I could only look at him once. I could just see that he was a giant in size, and that he kept his dull, lowering, bestial face turned towards the witness-box, and his bloodshot, vacant eyes staring on me. For an instant I tried to confront that look; for an instant I kept my attention fixed on him—on his blotched face, on the short grizzled hair above it—on his knotty, murderous right hand hanging loose over the bar in front of him, like the paw of a wild beast over the edge of his den. Then the horror of him—the double horror of confronting him, in the first place, and afterwards of seeing that he was an old man—overcame me; and I turned away faint, sick, and shuddering. I never faced him again; and at the end of my evidence, Robert considerately took me out.

When we met once more at the end of the examination, Robert told me that the prisoner never spoke, and never changed his position. He was either fortified by the cruel composure of the savage, or his faculties had not yet thoroughly recovered from the disease that had so lately shaken them. The magistrate seemed to doubt if he was in his right mind; but the evidence of the medical man relieved his uncertainty, and the prisoner was committed for trial on a charge of manslaughter.

Why not on a charge of murder? Robert explained the law to me when I asked that question. I accepted the explanation, but it did not satisfy me. Mary Mallinson was killed by a blow from the hand of Noah Truscott. That is murder in the sight of God. Why not murder in the sight of the law also?

* * * * *

June 18th. To-morrow is the day appointed for the trial at the Old Bailey. Before sunset this evening I went to look at Mary's grave. The turf has grown so green since I saw it last; and the flowers are springing up so prettily. A bird was perched dressing his feathers, on the low white headstone that bears the inscription of her name and age. I did not go near enough to disturb the little creature. He looked innocent and pretty on the grave, as Mary herself was in her life-time. When he flew away, I went and sat for a little by the headstone, and read the mournful lines on it. Oh, my love, my love! what harm or wrong had you ever done in this world, that you should die at eighteen by a blow from a drunkard's hand?

June 19th. The trial. My experience of what happened at it is limited, like my experience of the examination at the police-office, to the time occupied in giving my own evidence. They made me say much more than I said before the magistrate. Between examination and cross-examination, I had to go into almost all the particulars about poor Mary and her funeral that I have written in this journal; the jury listening to every word I spoke with the most anxious attention. At the end, the judge said a few words to me approving of my conduct, and then there was a clapping of hands among the people in court. I was so agitated and excited that I trembled all over when they let me go out into the air again. I looked at the prisoner both when I entered the witness-box and when I left it. The lowering brutality of his face was unchanged, but his faculties seemed to be more alive and observant than they were at the police-office. A frightful blue change passed over his face, and he drew his breath so heavily that the gasps were distictly audible, while I mentioned Mary by name, and described the mark of the blow on her temple. When they asked me if I knew anything of the prisoner, and I answered that I only knew what Mary herself had told me about his having been her father's ruin, he gave a kind of groan, and struck both his hands heavily on the dock. And when I passed beneath him on my way out of the court, he leaned over suddenly, whether to speak to me or to strike me I can't say, for he was immediately made to stand upright again by the turnkeys on either side of him. While the evidence proceeded (as Robert described it to me), the signs that he was suffering under superstitious terror became more and more apparent; until, at last, just as the lawyer appointed to defend him was rising to speak, he suddenly cried out, in a voice that startled every one, up to the very judge on the bench, "Stop!" There was a pause, and all eyes looked at him. The perspiration was pouring over his face like water, and he made strange, uncouth signs with his hands to the judge opposite. "Stop all this!" he cried again; "I've been the ruin of the father and the death of the child. Hang

me before I do more harm! Hang me, for God's sake, out of the way!" As soon as the shock produced by this extraordinary interruption had subsided, he was removed, and there followed a long discussion about whether he was of sound mind or not. The point was left to the jury to decide by their verdict. They found him guilty of the charge of manslaughter, without the excuse of insanity. He was brought up again, and condemned to transportation for life. All he did on hearing the sentence was to reiterate his desperate words, "Hang me before I do more harm! Hang me, for God's sake, out of the way?"

June 20th. I made yesterday's entry in sadness of heart, and I have not been better in my spirits to-day. It is something to have brought the murderer to the punishment that he deserves. But the knowledge that this most righteous act of retribution is accomplished, brings no consolation with it. The law does indeed punish Noah Truscott for his crime; but can it raise up Mary Mallinson from her last resting-place in the churchyard?

While writing of the law, I ought to record that the heartless wretch who allowed Mary to be struck down in his presence without making any attempt to defend her, is not likely to escape with perfect impunity. The policeman who looked after him to insure his attendance at the trial, discovered that he had committed past offences, for which the law can make him answer. A summons was executed upon him, and he was taken before the magistrate the moment he left the court after giving his evidence.

I had just written these few lines, and was closing my journal, when there came a knock at the door. I answered it, thinking Robert had called in his way home to say good-night, and found myself face to face with a strange gentleman, who immediately asked for Anne Rodway. On hearing that I was the person inquired for, he requested five minutes' conversation with me. I showed him into the little empty room at the back of the house, and waited, rather surprised and fluttered, to hear what he had to say.

He was a dark man, with a serious manner, and a short stern way of speaking. I was certain that he was a stranger, and yet there seemed something in his face not unfamiliar to me. He began by taking a newspaper from his pocket, and asking me if I was the person who had given evidence at the trial of Noah Truscott on a charge of manslaughter. I answered immediately that I was.

"I have been for nearly two years in London seeking Mary Mallinson, and always seeking her in vain," he said. "The first and only news I have had of her I found in the newspaper report of the trial yesterday."

He still spoke calmly, but there was something in the look of his eyes which showed me that he was suffering in spirit. A sudden nervousness overcame me, and I was obliged to sit down.

"You knew Mary Mallinson, sir?" I asked, as quietly as I could.

"I am her brother."

I clasped my hands and hid my face in despair. O! the bitterness of heart with which I heard him say those simple words!

"You were very kind to her," said the calm, tearless man. "In her name and for her sake, I thank you."

"O! sir," I said, "why did you never write to her when you were in foreign parts?"

"I wrote often," he answered, "but each of my letters contained a remittance of money. Did Mary tell you she had a step-mother? If she did, you may guess why none of my letters were allowed to reach her. I now know that this woman robbed my sister. Has she lied in telling me that she was never informed of Mary's place of abode?"

I remembered that Mary had never communicated with her step-mother after the separation, and could therefore assure him that the woman had spoken the truth.

He paused for a moment, after that, and sighed. Then he took out a pocket-book and said:

"I have already arranged for the payment of any legal expenses that may have been incurred by the trial; but I have still to reimburse you for the funeral charges which you so generously defrayed. Excuse my speaking bluntly on this subject, I am accustomed to look on all matters where money is concerned purely as matters of business."

I saw that he was taking several bank-notes out of the pocket-book, and stopped him.

"I will gratefully receive back the little money I actually paid, sir, because I am not well off, and it would be an ungracious act of pride in me to refuse it from you," I said. "But I see you handling bank-notes, any one of which is far beyond the amount you have to repay me. Pray put them back, sir. What I did for your poor lost sister, I did from my love and fondness for her. You have thanked me for that; and your thanks are all I can receive."

He had hitherto concealed his feelings, but I saw them now begin to get the better of him. His eyes softened, and he took my hand and squeezed it hard.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I beg your pardon, with all my heart."

There was silence between us, for I was crying; and I believe, at heart, he was crying too. At last, he dropped my hand, and seemed to change back, by an effort, to his former calmness.

"Is there no one belonging to you to whom

I can be of service?" he asked. "I see among the witnesses on the trial the name of a young man who appears to have assisted you in the enquiries which led to the prisoner's conviction. Is he a relation?"

"No, sir — at least, not now — but I hope——"

"What?"

"I hope that he may, one day, be the nearest and dearest relation to me that a woman can have." I said those words boldly, because I was afraid of his otherwise taking some wrong view of the connection between Robert and me.

"One day?" he repeated. "One day may be a long time hence."

"We are neither of us well off, sir," I said. "One day, means the day when we are a little richer than we are now."

"Is the young man educated? Can he produce testimonials to his character? Oblige me by writing his name and address down on the back of that card."

When I had obeyed, in a handwriting which I am afraid did me no credit, he took out another card, and gave it to me.

"I shall leave England to-morrow," he said. "There is nothing now to keep me in my own country. If you are ever in any difficulty or distress (which, I pray God, you may never be), apply to my London agent, whose address you have there." He stopped, and looked at me attentively—then took my hand again. "Where is she buried?" he said suddenly, in a quick whisper, turning his head away.

I told him, and added that we had made the grave as beautiful as we could with grass and flowers.

I saw his lips whiten and tremble.

"God bless and reward you!" he said, and drew me towards him quickly and kissed my forehead. I was quite overcome, and sank down and hid my face on the table. When I looked up again he was gone.

* * * * *

June 25th, 1841. I write these lines on my wedding morning, when little more than a year has passed since Robert returned to England.

His salary was increased yesterday to one hundred and fifty pounds a-year. If I only knew where Mr. Mallinson was, I would write and tell him of our present happiness. But for the situation which his kindness procured for Robert, we might still have been waiting vainly for the day that has now come.

I am to work at home for the future, and Sally is to help us in our new abode. If Mary could have lived to see this day! I am not ungrateful for my blessings; but, oh, how I miss that sweet face, on this morning of all others!

I got up to-day early enough to go alone to the grave, and to gather the nosegay that now lies before me from the flowers that grow round it. I shall put it in my bosom when Robert comes to fetch me to the church. Mary would have been my bridesmaid if she had lived; and I can't forget Mary, even on my wedding-day.

THE SHADOW OF THE HAND.

"How varied are life's flowery paths,
With varied pleasures strown;
But there, where duty points the track,
Is happiness alone."

Thus musing, as in fancy, far
My footsteps seem'd to stray—
Methought some strange mysterious power
Impell'd them on their way.

It was a shady path I trod,
Yet beautiful to see;
For there were flowers upon the turf
And birds in every tree.

I loved the flowers, their form, their hue,
Their fragrance, faint and rare;
I loved the birds, whose plaintive strains,
Harmonious, fill'd the air.

The clustering shadows of the trees
Upon the ground were cast:
They seem'd to change their forms, each time
A breath of wind went past.

Yet still methought,—as if the path
Were some good angel's care,—
The figure of a hand I traced
Among the shadows there!

A hand, that ever pointed me
Along that peaceful way:
A way so happy, strange 'twould seem,
That I should wish to stray!

Yet oft, too oft, I knew not whence,
Gay sounds would reach mine ear,
Of music, mirth, and revelry,
And I would pause to hear:

And through the trees, on either side
That shady path, would gleam
Bright eyes, and glittering forms,—such sights
As happy lovers dream!

And they would call in wily tones,
That sounded sweet and low,—
And wave to me their snow-white arms,
Until I long'd to go.

But, while the shadow of the hand
Upon the greensward lay,
I could not turn to right or left,—
A charm was on the way!

I felt, beneath that hallow'd spell,—
New life my being thrill.—
And all things lovely seem'd to take
A lovelier semblance still.

The air breathed purer,—from the flowers
A rarer fragrance given,
And through the leaves above I saw
The blue and quiet heaven.

All was so sweet within that path,
I would not from it stray,
And leave that shadow of the hand
Heaven-sent to point my way.

There may be sunnier paths afar,
With flowers more bright and rare;
But what of them, unless that hand
Have cast its shadow there?

Not fortune's brightest beams I ask
Around my path to play,
If duty, with its guiding hand,
But point my onward way.

NOT VERY COMMON THINGS.

Lord Ashburton gave to the chief rarities of his country the name of Common Things, and Miss Burdett Coutts offers prizes for a right knowledge of good housekeeping among the poor, under the name of Prizes for Common Things. Yet, what is called common knowledge, is in reality common ignorance; for subjects, about which it is most essential to the well-being and comfort of society for everybody to be well informed, are least well known. Among gentlemen, the power to quote certain scraps of Horace, to repeat as intelligent conversation what has been read in last week's newspaper, are common things; but the power of independent thought—which ought to be the commonest of things among our educated classes—is so rare, that a man passes into an exceptional class, and makes or mars his fortune when he thus marches out of the ranks and becomes a thinker. The naked little worm found under water, that spends all its life in the collection of morsels of stick and chips, which it glues round about its person, accurately typifies our own intellectual career. We are constantly seeking, under a pool of printer's ink, a stick from this book, or a chip from that journal; covering ourselves with what we call information, and thus casing our minds with mere fragments. We are well content to be as caddisworms, and to count him the best informed, who yields most of the glue of memory with which to fix the particles that form his intellectual surroundings.

The one thing that has to be made common, then, is the habit of independent thinking; of putting one's own mind into one's work. Why does the cook spoil the potatoes? Why does she make our meat our misery, and dinner the extinction of all powers of thought for the next two hours? Cook works by tradition, or at best by cookery books, and puts no mind of her own into her work. It is stark nonsense to suppose that cooking can be done by rule, when all the books being nearly the same, there is a failure in the very first condition of successful imitation. No two kitchen fires, are alike as to the degree and the way in which they give out heat. In qualities of water, in saucepans, in the season of the year, in the constantly varying quality or texture of the same article employed as food or condiment—the cook, who is merely, after the custom of the day, a creature of rules which she has gathered round her as the defence of her own secret ignorance and incapacity—can only spoil food; and does spoil it. Let any intelligent woman without a rule in her head go into a kitchen and devote thought and attention to the boiling of a potato for the first time in her life; measuring her powers; using her faculties of observation and her judgment; and we desire nothing better, in that way, than to eat for the remainder of our lives none but potatoes cooked as she would cook them. What is the constant cry against the housemaid? Thoughtless, thoughtless! Betty cannot be got to think of what she does while she is doing it. When children fall into the nursery fire or are tragically shot out of perambulators, or pick up foolish words and ways, the cause commonly is, that nursemaids do not think of what they are about; do not put attentively their minds into their work.

Travelling up in society as high as we may, still we see equally manifest the same defect in nine out of ten sections. Millions of people are provided with their thoughts as with their clothes; authors, printers, booksellers and newsmen stand, in relation to their minds, simply as shoemakers and tailors stand, to their bodies. Certain ideas come up and are adopted, as long-tailed great coats or skeleton petticoats are adopted. No doubt, if we all thought—each man only a little of the spirit and meaning of each act of life—the business of life would be done with an earnestness quite frightful to be told about; though glorious to think about, if one were by chance to think.

For our own parts, we should trouble nobody with any speculations of this sort, beyond the assertion that a girl may be shown how to darn and how to patch; how to bake and how to brew; how to scrub and how to rub; how to buy pennyworths with pennies, and yet be sent out to the rich man a defective servant, and to the poor man an unthrifty uncomfortable wife. On the other hand, she may have received formal instruction in no one of these things, and yet be able to overcome every difficulty as it arises, by help of the spirit that has been put into her, and will not only soon do well, but will perpetually advance towards perfection in whatever ministry may be demanded of her by the circumstances of her future life. If she has been trained to live by How and Why—always pouring down, through these conductors, the whole energy of the mind upon the matter actually in hand—she will surely make a wise wife or a clever servant. There is nothing in Englishmen and women to prevent the vast majority of them from going about their work in this way, except the want of early stimulus to a free and full habit of thought; this being the defect of nearly all our schools. That there should be this defect in schools

under the material despotisms of the continent one can admit as inevitable; but in the English school-system, tyranny of ideas can surely be mastered. A strong and hopeful step towards this achievement has been taken by Miss Burdett Coutts, which is worthy of much following.

Pursuing beyond theory Lord Ashburton's recommendation, Miss Burdett Coutts has shown how to do all that can at present be done towards the attainment of the result at which we ought chiefly to aim. The nature of that lady's effort and the first results of it, are set down in a little book which—while it lets us know that there is something being done—shows also, clearly enough, that there is much yet to do.* The schoolmistresses and pupil teachers of a certain standing in the Church of England schools of Middlesex, are the particular material upon which Miss Coutts has commenced her experiment. She offers, to distribute annually among these, certain prizes varying in value, for the best answers to a set of questions upon which (reserving our own notion on the subject), we follow the rest of society in calling Common Things. The subjects of examination are, as to food;—the prices, qualities, economical uses, and various ways of cooking, or otherwise using different kinds of meat, vegetables, and grocery. As to clothes;—the general price, use, and comparative values of the different materials; whatever relates to cutting out and making, mending, altering, and keeping in right order. As to household arrangements generally, candidates for these prizes must be prepared to say how health is best preserved at home; they are required to be informed fully as to the duties of servants and the proper management of children and sick people; to know, also, how to act in any case of sudden accident, or other great emergency.

The result of this offer made by Miss Coutts, and accompanied, on her part, with earnest and direct attention to the teaching in the schools, was the appearance at Whiteland's Training School, on the appointed day of trial, of fourteen schoolmistresses and sixty-nine young women in various stages of training for the teacher's office. Before them an examination-paper was set which contained twenty questions relating to the subjects we have enumerated; and from which we quote three:—

What common things can most suitably be taught to children who get their living in town, or to those who get their living in the country?

Give an account of the different grains used for making bread; and give a good receipt for making a quartern loaf, naming the weight of flour, &c.

Enumerate the different darning stitches. For what articles should they severally be used? Give full directions for making a man's shirt, a housemaid's apron, and knitting a stocking.

It is noticeable that the first of the questions here cited is one of those (although it simply asks the schoolmistresses that are, and schoolmistresses that are to be, how they propose to exercise their office in reference to matters of this kind) to which the answers were least satisfactory: so that the persons who have shown most anxiety and determination to become teachers of common knowledge, have yet to learn how to teach it. Another question upon which answers generally failed, related to the outfit for the schoolmistress herself; the articles she would need, their material, quality and price.

Not the least valuable part of the little pamphlet is the body of citations from the written answers of the prizewomen. From them we see how they would speak and work. There is a great deal to praise and to respect in these effusions; but the one thing needed, if our judgment be correct, has yet to be discovered. Of course it would be ridiculous to offer schoolmistresses a prize for independent thought—for, in fact, suddenly becoming exceptions to the rule followed by the rest of the world. All that could be done was to invite them to show competence under the test of questions that are of a sort to encourage them to think. Here and there are answers evidently well-considered, and containing thoughts that belong really to the writer; but they are exceptions. Secondhand and second-hundredth-hand opinions are the rule. The leaven of quick independent teachers' wits which shall communicate itself to the quick wits of children; the strong thought that begets thought, we seldom find. No shame to these humble teachers is implied in such a stricture. We might say the same of men who have had infinitely better means of making themselves what all should desire to be.

To remedy some of the defects she has observed, Miss Coutts has added to her little book a few ideas of cottage cookery, and a collection of real accounts of the way in which labourers proportion their several expenses to their incomes. Every one of the ninety-three candidates, on the day of the distribution of the prizes, received a copy of this account of the prizes with its wise suggestions of their meaning. The books and prizes, we should not omit to add for the behoof of others, were given by the donor, quietly, at a private social gathering and tea-party. Speech-makers in large waistcoats were not brought down, with the great public, to talk and stare. Nothing was done to hurt the modest, quiet temper which is fittest in the girl who is to become a teacher of the poor. Out in the big world, there is much talking and much hearty applause; but, in their quiet world, the schoolmistress and pupil teachers come only into pleasant contact with their friend and benefactress.

The short-comings to which we have re-

* A summary account of Prizes for Common Things offered and awarded by Miss Burdett Coutts, at the Whiteland's Training Institution.

ferred are, of course, so far from being objections to the effort made, that they are strongest evidence of its necessity. The impulse given by Miss Coutts to the Church schools of Middlesex, others may give to any schools they please—church or dissenting—in the districts nearest to themselves. A great expenditure of money is not necessary; only there must be active benevolence and a determined will.

Miss Coutts renews her offer, and intends, apparently, to work on without flagging.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SILVER HORN.

I AM in the diligence, on the road between Paris and Lyons. I have been journeying wearily all the night, and now, with an uneasy stretch, have roused myself to let down the window of the coupé. I look out inquiringly into the night. It is dark—pitch dark—all round us. But there is a grey streak a-head, joyfully welcomed as significant of morning. Not quite so comforting is the chilling blast which enters, well iced, by the window; making my teeth chatter galvanically, and my whole body shiver in supreme wretchedness. So I draw it up furiously, and sink back again into the corner.

It has been freezing fiercely for the last fortnight. Indeed, it is the hardest frost the Bon Dieu has been pleased to send these many years. At least, so an aged travelling companion was pleased to remark, as he walked by the coupé window, up a hill. The roads are thus assimilated to an endless continuity of Dresden mirrors, admirably suited for headlong and express travelling; but highly perilous for delicate nervous organisations.

By-and-by it begins to grow lighter. The grey streak has made progress during our last doze, and we find it now spread all over the heavens. I begin to feel aspirations beyond the four sides of the coupé. I hearken complaisantly to the driver, who is chaunting his morning song over head, enlivened by stray cracking of his long whip, and join carelessly in the refrain. Anon he turns him round, and hails his gossip, the conductor, across the baggage, which is piled to a fearful height upon the roof—a very Pelion upon Ossa of luggage. The gossip answers with a neat jest in the French manner; whereof the subject may be the Normandy team before us—perhaps the worthy driver himself; or, more likely, the unsuspecting occupant of the coupé. Very merry they are, whatever be the reason. And, not long after, there is a hollow sound, as of tramping, overhead, which signifies that Pelion and Ossa have been traversed by some one from behind. Shortly come fragrant aromatic gales, suggestive of a social morning pipe.

Another hour has passed. We are going slowly up a steep hill. There is a gentle tapping at the frosty pane, which I hastily let down, and so discover our driver saluting me profoundly, even to the tops of his huge jack-boots. Has Monsieur reposed well? He has the honour to inform Monsieur that we shall shortly attain the Auberge — that is, after surmounting this hill, D'Enfer. True, we were slightly behind time; but what of that? After the hill we should gallop all the way, as Monsieur should see. A graceful bow, and the jack-boots are seen swinging perilously at the sides of the diligence, en route to the box.

We are on the brow of the hill at last—the hill D'Enfer. There is a long white causeway—an extended sheet of the Dresden mirror aforesaid—stretching far down into the valley, till, at the extreme end, something like a cluster of white cottages is descried—the promised land for the traveller unbreakfasted. The manner of our descent is awful to conceive. Gathering up the reins with fury, our driver seems to grow delirious. The long whip descends fore and aft upon the backs of the white Normandy team, who plunge forward at full speed. The huge machine, Pelion upon Ossa and all, rolls heavily after, reeling and swaying in a manner perfectly sickening. The single occupant of the coupé holds on convulsively to his seat, and bethinks him of the state of his soul. A fearful din, compounded of window-panes dancing in their frames; of timber straining and groaning dismally; of stones being crunched; of hollow rumbling; of chains jangling: an everlasting chorus of shrieks, of fierce Holoas! Holoas! of Sacr-r-r-es, Tête Dieus, Diantres, and other profane matter. The white Normandies, with long flying tails, bound madly on, kicking and biting one another, and whining all the while in the most unearthly fashion. Anon comes a fearful convulsion, and the huge machine totters. A Normandy has fallen, and the others appear to make one kicking struggling heap of horse-flesh over him. Yet we stop not for that. Diligence and the heap roll on together of their own momentum, our charioteer standing up in the jack-boots, and plying the long cracking whip remorselessly, lashing the horses to their feet. More Sacr-r-rès and Diantres, and we are speeding on as before; only the white Normandies are now grown delirious, their red eye-balls glaring wildly. In a few minutes more we are at the bottom, without accident, and drive up, jingling and clanking, to the door of the village Auberge.

Half-an-hour for breakfast; that is, half-an-hour and a little more—equivalent, as everybody knows, to a good hour. A picturesque scene at the door of the old village inn: many groups standing round, admiring the huge diligence and its freight. Monsieur would like breakfast? Monsieur rather thinks he would; and Monsieur is further inclined to believe that a petite verre would

be signally efficacious in restoring the general tone of the system. Would Monsieur step this way? And exceedingly grateful is the sight that greets the dilapidated voyageur "this way." Upon a snowy tablecloth are set forth steaming coffee and hot rolls, cotelettes and omelette, with delicate Strasburg pie and other such delectable accompaniments; not forgetting the tall flask of Chablis alone in the centre, in all the dignity of age and hoary dust.

As these comestibles fade away before me, like the "baseless fabric of a vision," I begin to take a less desponding view of affairs in general. "After all," I thought, as I filled out the last glass of Chablis, "after all, if travelling has its little inconveniences, we must not complain. What else is life itself but a weary journey in a coupé? Occasionally we are allowed to get out, and stretch our limbs and enjoy ourselves for a short while." I was in an admirable mood at that moment for such sound philosophy. But alack-a-day! I soon heard a jingling at the window, and sundry sounds of struggling and restiveness which were but too familiar to me. My prison-house was ready at the door, yawning for its prey. Four fresh Normandies, in delightful spirits, are performing all manner of gymnastics in their impatience to be off. Once more I am hoisted by strong arms into the coupé. Our driver standing at the door, drinks gracefully to all round in a farewell petite verre; then drawing himself slowly to his box. Furious plunging of the Normandies as he gathers up the reins. Prodigious cracking of the long whip. Fra-ra-ra! from behind. "Messieurs, stand aside, I pray of you! There! Tra-ra! Tra-ra! En avant! Bon voyage!"

That day of travel rolled on wearily. It would be idle to relate with what dull monotony the hours succeeded one another, or by what stages I was brought to the conclusion that life had become a burden to me. No longer did I take interest in the eccentric habits of our driver, nor in the playful vagaries of the Normandies. Even the pleasing excitement of a perilous mountain descent failed to rouse me—I had grown blasé. The fine Chablis philosophy has evaporated, being utterly jolted away. In this dismal mood I drag on life, till night has once more set in.

We have stopped at last. There is a great iron gate beside us, with a dull oil lamp swinging overhead. There is a great white post rising from the ground, on which a broad sign-board is lazily flapping to and fro. Some one is pulling vigorously at a bell with a very mournful note; and, through the twisted ironwork of the gate, we see lanterns moving this way. I am invited to descend.

"Where are we? What place is this?"

"Why this is the Cor d'Argent, where Monsieur can dine and make himself comfortable—for one hour, and no longer—Nom du Pape!"

It was a curious and most mysterious looking old mansion, this Silver Horn. It had not the persuasive and seductive aspect of a well-favoured inn; but was a dark, heavy-browed and even menacing pile of building. It loomed on us through the darkness, a black, shadowy mass, and, on the whole, gave small promise of decent entertainment. From a large shield over the door, now worn away and defaced, I conjectured that, in better days, it had belonged to some noble seigneur. The host stood under the shelter of his porch, waiting to receive us—a grim descendant of some old Huguenot of the days of the great Louis—so grim and grizzled indeed, that as he stood there shading the light with his hand, I almost fancied I was looking at the effigies of Messire de Beze, or that of Maître Jean Calvin.

Adopting the fashion of the stage, I shall allow the scene to close in here, and let the curtain in the next act rise upon "A chamber in the inn of the Cor d'Argent"—a lofty oaken room whereof the oak that figured in its panels, in its smooth floor and furniture, had grown into a mourning ebon tint. Dinner, and the vestiges of dinner, have passed away, and a flask—not of Chablis this time, but of sound Burgundy—has just been set on. There is a roaring wood fire—a conflagration of riven blocks—raised upon the backs of queer blinking monsters; the high-backed arm-chair has been drawn in closer. In short, all has been made snug and taut for the night, as the sailors say. My diligence is, by this time, many miles on its road; and, at this moment, may be reeling and tottering on some perilous hill-side. The fact was, I had grown so contented with the caravanserai that I had suffered the huge machine to go its way without me.

"Not for a principality would I stir now," I said, complacently, as I looked at the comforting fire before me, and filled out another glass of the Burgundy,—"positively not for a principality!"

"A very mysterious old place this," I continued, after a short pause, as my eye wandered down to the other end of the room, which was all in darkness. The light of the lamp did not reach very far; so a great black cloud, the opening as it were of some dark abyss, seemed to hover at the far extremity. The great curtains, hanging in stiff massive folds with breadths of shadow playing over them, were awe-inspiring enough too. I bethought me of one of Mr. Fitzball's productions, a drama of thrilling interest, entitled The Innkeeper of Abbeville, which I remember having seen played at one of the transpontine theatres. What the exact plot was I did not very well recollect; but I recalled perfectly the lonely roadside inn, and the startling melange of horrors which were enacted there one dark night. The wearied traveller sleeps—soft music—the

assassin (all cloak) advances stealthily; he stands over him—traveller breathes hard—agitated music—Ha! what was that? some one comes! music still more agitated—they are at the door—lamp extinguished—a groan—scene closes in slowly to heart-rending music.

It was curious certainly that there were so few signs of life about the inn. It is odd not hearing some sounds of moving about. Could it be that I am the only inhabitant? I can make nothing of it. This Burgundy is decidedly good. Then those queer stories I have read about posadas and patrones—people going to sleep in a posada (with the horse tethered at the other end) and awaking at the critical moment when the patrone's knife is in the air! A very unpleasant state of things. It would be a good joke if my patrone were to pay me such a visit—why if—

There came a sound of footsteps on the oak floor, and the figure of the host himself stepped from out of the black cloud at the end of the room. As he advanced the light fell upon his yellow polished head, which seemed as if it had been carved out of some hard, close-grained wood.

"The Burgundy, would I have more of it?"

(The chin so grim and grizzled! with a sort of bluish tint over it. It was Messire Beze for all the world!)

"Well, then, should he show me the room where I am to sleep—that is, if Monsieur will permit him?"

"No, thank you," I said, "I am not going to bed just yet. By-the-way, many people stopping in the house?"

"Besides yourself, not one."

"Ah! that is bad for trade!"

"I do not complain."

"And the next town?"

"It is three leagues away."

"And the village?"

"One league."

"Not a very social neighbourhood, I should say?"

"There is not a house within a league's distance."

I was a little discomposed by this confession; and there was a pause for a second or so.

"To say the truth, mon ami," I said at last, "I can scarcely think this house was ever intended for an inn."

"No more was it," said he, rubbing his hand slowly over his chin, with a grinding sound like that of a file. "It was once the house of a great marquis, now passed away with all his tribe. But that was long ago, in the days of the Persecutions."

"And the marquis?"

"He passed over into foreign countries. But there was an old man—his chaplain, in fact—who refused to abandon the ancestral walls, and so met his death here. This was an ancestor of mine."

(I could have sworn it! I had only to supply the Geneva bands, and the old preacher was there before me!)

"The hand of the Lord lay heavy on us in those times," he continued. "There is a tradition of their having dragged him bleeding down the long gallery outside, with his young daughter clinging to him, and shrieking all the way.—A night of horrors! But it is time that I withdraw. Monsieur will excuse me if I wish him good night!"

"Wait a moment," I said, rising, "I think I shall go myself, too. Where am I to sleep to-night?"

He took up the lamp and preceded me. As we came out upon the gallery a fierce gust came sweeping by, slamming the door behind us, and almost extinguishing the light. Presently another door was heard to slam—afar off; and the sound echoed down what seemed to be a long and lofty gallery. My sleeping room lay at the very end of this gallery, vis-à-vis to the one we had just left. I thought we would never reach the end of it,—it seemed such a lone and dreary journey. At intervals, too, we would come suddenly upon some black yawning recess, from which I was momentarily expecting some unearthly figure to glide forth.

"And the young lady?" I said, as we at last found ourselves in the gloomy chamber I was to inhabit for the night. "You did not say what became of her."

"You are interested in my tale, Monsieur?"

"Why, yes," I said, "it has made rather an impression on me."

"Well! there is little more to tell. That night they put her in a lonely room, with a guard at the door; meaning, no doubt, to preserve her for deeper suffering and humiliation. But the Lord is mindful of his own, and he assisted her out of this lion's den. That night she fled away, nor was she ever seen again by mortal man."

Come, I thought, the plot thickens. Marvels and mysteries are gathering round me.

"They said she sat up late that night writing. The light in the window was seen burning all night; and, when they came in the morning, the only trace they could find of her was a note, lying on her desk, addressed to themselves—her father's murderers. See," he continued, taking from his pocket-book an old crumbling scrap of paper, grown tawny with age like a mummy's skin—"see! this is the holy relic itself. It has come down to me by the hands of the persecuted, written in words of fire."

He unfolded it; and, drawing the lamp to him, read slowly and in a tone that sounded strangely solemn from the perfect stillness that reigned around:

On a tué mon père et deshonnoré son corps. Malheur à vous! Maudit soit votre race! Le sang des Martyrs monte vers les cieux et réclame le justice. H——. O mon Dieu! avec mon dernier soupir j'invoque ta vengeance!

[They have killed my father and dishonoured his body, cursed be your race! The blood of the Martyrs rises to Heaven and demands justice. O my God! with my last breath I invoke thy vengeance!]

His voice rang in my ears for long after that night. As he stood there delivering that wild malediction, he looked a very prophet from the wilderness. He did not speak for some time, but remained with eyes upturned to Heaven—as it seemed to me, praying.

"Ah! Messire de Beze—Messire de Beze!" I muttered under my breath.

"Was she handsome?" I said, at last, to break this depressing silence.

"Handsome!" he said, coming down again to earth. "Handsome! I know not. There is an old painting here," he continued, holding up the lamp to the wall, "which they say is meant for her; but who can tell?"

It was a faded, mouldering bit of canvas, let in the wall, with a rent here and there; yet the face and figure could be made out perfectly—and a fair face it was: with her golden hair falling round her to the ground. She was kneeling; and, at her feet was a sort of scroll, on which I could make out the words, "How long, O Lord! how long!"

He had followed the direction of my eyes, and saw that I was studying this mystic device—"How long, O Lord!" I heard him muttering softly to himself; and, before I could address him, he had glided from the room without a word.

I was alone at last, and I must confess felt infinitely more at my ease now that I was released from the presence of the grim Huguenot. But the portrait and the strange history connected with it, had completely upset me. I would have given anything to have heard more about it. And that desponding legend underneath, significant of a world of patient hope, suffering, and despair—I could not get it out of my head. Such a fate for one so young and beautiful—for one so——

Come, this will never do. If I let this go on, I shall have no sleep to night, and Heaven knows I want it.

When I sleep in strange places I always have a fancy for learning all the details of the whereabouts before I lie down. With this view I went over to the large bow window, or rather recess, for it enclosed a good portion of the room; and, lifting aside the heavy curtains, looked out. It was now near the middle of night by the castle clock. The moon was up and playing tranquilly upon the objects outside, all whitened over with a film of frost. There was a broad, old-fashioned garden just below, upon which the cold pale light streamed with wonderful effect, every line being brought out with the distinctness of a photograph. There were broad alleys, marked out with some rugged yews that had once known trimming; and there was a shattered lion's head, with a dry marble basin underneath: the stream had ceased to gush from the lion's mouth long ago—longer than the memory of the most ancient inhabitant. But what particularly attracted me was a circular pond in the centre, with a battered effigy of Regulus (in lead) rising in the middle—Regulus turning his sightless orbs up in the white moonlight. Strange to say, the water had remained unfrozen, and was surging and eddying, from unknown depths. I recollect how curiously its black turbid surface contrasted with the snowy look of everything round. It made me feel chilly and uncomfortable to look at it. So I turned away from the window, and set myself seriously to the business of disrobing. Nor had I much time to spare. The fire had nearly died out, and the lamp was showing symptoms of inanition.

It was certainly an awful-looking structure, that antique bedstead. Four black pillars shooting high in the air, and a dark mass of draperies and carvings crowding all overhead. Indeed, as it rose towering to the ceiling, it reminded me of nothing so much as of a catafalque—a plumed, ghostly catafalque. A fanciful conceit, truly. But some way that night I found myself tending towards a strain of mortuary metaphor. However, catafalque or no, I was very tired and exhausted, and it was in a very placid state of mind that I laid down my head upon the pillow, and turned round to sleep.

My lamp, after many struggles with approaching dissolution, had gone out with a sudden start some minutes before. As it shot up and flickered in its agony, my catafalque was being exhibited on the wall beside me in all sorts of queer shapes and spectral elongations, which disturbed me somewhat and gave me an uneasy feeling. So I was very glad when it last gave up the ghost and sank down into darkness most cimmerian.

Someway, with all my fatigue, I found that sleep was not to be my portion—for some time, at least. I had been thinking of too many things; and these thoughts were now rioting and jostling one another in my unhappy brain, with activity most ill-timed. Then, again, I wanted to get to sleep—a state of mind, as everybody knows, fatally subversive of the end intended. Every incident of that weary day seemed to be chasing each other through my head. The yellow skull-like forehead and black piercing eyes of the Huguenot landlord kept dancing up and down before my eyes, shut them as close as I would. Confused sounds as of horns, with shouting in all its degrees, now faint and musical as if afar off, now sharp and acute, seemed ever rising from the depths of the pillow, forcing the barriers of my ears into the recesses of my bewildered brain; while a monotonous buzzing sensation, like the drone of a bagpipe, revived once more the ceaseless rolling of the diligence. Under such cruel torture, it is no-wise surprising that I soon reached the tossing stage: and not long after found

myself beating my pillow—very vindictively, I must confess. At last, in utter recklessness, I lay back, quite resigned, staring in most unnatural wakefulness at the great bow window opposite. The moonlight was still streaming placidly in through the lozenge-shaped panes, just touching, as it passed, with little white splashes of light, projecting bits of the polished old furniture. I remember particularly a prominent knob on an ancient, queerly-shaped garde-robe, which grew before my eyes to the likeness of a mannikin's head, with features all complete, and which in process of time appeared actually to wink familiarly at me. Where had I seen him before? Aye, that was the question. At the door of the last auberge, was it? Perhaps so. I can ask the conductor at the next stage. Yes, that will do. This coupè or catafalque is getting very cold—very. Take care!—take care! Go easy down the hill! Where am I?

What a good idea. I must have been dozing, that is certain. No longer in the diligence, thank Heaven! but in the old Cor d'Argent. There, overhead, was the sombre canopy, and there, through the mullions of the great bow-window, was the moonlight still streaming in icily, and falling aslant upon the oaken floor. "How curious," thought I, "the association of ideas;" and my eyes wandered over to the mannikin's head, which no doubt had set me dreaming of the diligence. There he was, staring me familiarly as ever, with the same white streak of light upon his cheek. As I looked with a sort of lazy recognition, I was a little puzzled at finding the white spot disappear of a sudden, and, at the same time, I became conscious that the light in the room had become obscured, as if some object had interposed between me and the window.

I turned round hastily, and saw—as it seemed to me—something very like a shadowy human figure sitting in the window. I did not gather more than that; for I was so startled, and—shall I confess it—so frightened, that I shut my eyes tight on the instant, without waiting to see more, and sank back with a sudden oppression on my chest, which it is painful, even now, to recal. I believe I am as courageous as the generality of men; but somehow I have always had an instinctive dread of anything of this sort; for, as far as I could see, even in that short glance, there was a filmy transparency about what I had seen that whispered me that this was no human intruder.

Stuff! to be frightened at a mere spectrum, at the offspring of indigestion, of rebellious Burgundy and truffles! Well, I must say I had hoped better things of myself. Besides, there were such creatures as nightmares, were there not? To be sure there were. So reasoning in this fashion I thought I would venture to take another look, and I would lay myself ten to one it would be gone.

Slowly, and with a palpitating heart, I opened my eyes—not in that direction, but looking towards the mannikin, by way of experiment. The white splash of light had not returned, or rather had departed with it, and the carved knob of the garde-robe was there instead of him.

Ah! still there! Yes, full in the moonlight, and sitting at the little table was the same figure—a woman's—writing she seemed to be. But so dim were the outlines, so faint and colourless its filmy texture, that every instant I thought it would melt away and dissolve into the calm waste of moonlight playing round it. Such an unearthly bluish tinge in that moonlight.

There she sat, with her head bent over, intently writing it seemed; yet so still—motionless as death. And there was I, sitting up in the bed watching her, with strained eyeballs, perfectly fascinated; my forehead damp with a cold sweat, my heart palpitating so that I could hear every beat. There was a bell near me I knew, even within reach of my arm. But, for all the world I durst not have stirred. There she sat and wrote on, motionless as ever. She had long yellow hair, which fell about her face as she bent over, and reached nearly to the ground, and which looked a bright gold colour where the moon fell on it. But what struck me, even in all my agitation, was how straight and heavy it seemed to fall—not clustering, or in wavy tresses: it seemed as if it had been wet. And her dress—yes, that seemed, too, absolutely glistening and clinging close to her as if fresh from the water. It was stained all over with sand and gravel. How is all this to end, I thought, with a sort of hopeless despair. Just then she seemed to move, —to raise her head. The golden locks fell back heavily, and she was now leaning on her hand looking up to the sky. The blue sepulchral light passed in a slanting line across the face, and lit up its outward edge, and the hand and arm. I watched with delirious expectation. She had continued long in that attitude,—looking up to heaven, —when, on a sudden, the golden locks dropped aside—and I felt that she had turned her face, and was looking fixedly at me! By the yellow light, I saw before me a marble-looking face, all bleached; and dull, sunken eyes looking at me. Such a morne, melancholy, despairing gaze! Often have I seen it since in my dreams. The sketchy, shadowy figure was now quivering in the broad band of moonlight, like a dissolving view, before it passes away. Was she going to pass away? No—she had stood up, —she was moving towards the bed—towards me! gliding onwards with a soft floating motion scarcely perceptible. O, the agony of that instant! The lack-lustre eyes never turned from me a moment; and I heard her dress sweeping over the floor with a wet, sludgy sound!

She was almost beside me now. There was a strange chill—a sudden dampness in

the air! There was a shadowy figure bending over me! I gave a wild gasping cry! Help! And I felt a cold wet hand laid upon my shoulder!

I recollect nothing more after that. That night of horrors passed away, and morning came at last. Whether I had had the nightmare or not, the reader may be sure I did not tarry for another night under the roof-tree of the Silver Horn.

CHIP.

COPY OF COURT-ROLL.

A FEW years ago, four Acts were passed, each more mysterious than the other, for the Enfranchisement of Copyholds. These—like many other products of the wisdom of Parliament—have been so hedged about with difficulties and are so unintelligible, that no good can come of them. We are still made to bear with some of the quaint old absurdities of mediæval times, and to hold our lands by copy of court-roll; rendering homage to the lord by service of reader, user and prender; paying a fine and a heriot on the death of the lord of the manor, and the like on every alienation; after the manner of our ancesters centuries ago. In spite of railways, telegraphs, printing-presses, and of this very periodical itself, we still cling in a few districts to the quaint fashions of the middle ages. We have so far improved certainly that no agricultural Damon of the present day can be robbed of his Phyllis by an insatiate lord; nor can the whole of the tenants be termed "villeins in gross," and be sold bodily; but he may be robbed legally nevertheless.

Take heriots as an example. A heriot is the best horned beast; and the lord is entitled—in the manors of which I speak—to one heriot for every tenement occupied by the tenant either upon every conveyance of the property (termed an alienation), upon the death of the tenant, or upon the death of the lord. I could quote an instance of recent occurrence, where, upon the death of a tenant who was in possession of fourteen tenements, the lord seized fourteen of the successor's best milch cows. Nor did the matter end here. On the occurrence of any of the events above mentioned, the lord receives eight times the ancient rent; and, as this rent amounts in most instances to three or four pounds, it was found that the heir to the unfortunate owner of the fourteen tenements, would be required to pay some four hundred and fifty pounds for rent; and this after the disappearance of his milch cows.

Then there is the attending the Lord's Court, and doing homage — not exactly "openly and humbly kneeling, being ungirt, uncovered, and holding up the hands both together between those of the lord, &c."—but by wasting a long day at a dirty country inn. There are, moreover the customs, established by our ancestors and still daily practised, of which I will mention only service days. Besides money payments, the tenant is obliged to give up mow-days, due-days, plough-days, and catch-days; in virtue of which he is required to mow the lord's land, reap it in time of harvest, and carry the corn to the nearest mill to grind, so many times a year.

I make no mention of the inconvenience to land-owners who have a small plot of copyhold property (as is often the case) intermixed with their freehold, and which necessarily increases the expense of transfer; nor do I adduce one half of the evils attendant upon copyhold tenure. I would merely assume in conclusion, that if these feudal customs were highly politic, and very necessary (as they may have been) in the stormy days of our ancestors when lord and vassal were glad to band together for mutual support, that now they can safely be dispensed with; for, it is difficult to imagine Smith, the lord of the manor of Clodhopples—who reads the Mark Lane Express, makes turnip lanterns for the baby, and behaves in other respects as a peaceable agriculturist—interrupted in these pursuits by the appearance of Jones, the neighbouring lord of the manor of Clodipole, at the head of his vassals, buff-jerkins, hauberks, "et tout complet," the said Jones bent upon a raid on the quiet Smith's cattle, and the forcible abduction of his cook.

Do not let us boast of our high state of civilisation, until the best friends of the British Constitution have successfully abolished suit and service holdings, with many more of its existing absurdities.

MILVERSTON WORTHIES.

IT was a pouring wet morning in Milverston one Friday in May last year, nevertheless the whole town was astir and expectant. Miss Prior had been planted at her window for an hour, with her sharp eyes peering down the High Street, that at the first hum of "They are coming," she might be ready to dart off to St. Mary's Church, to get a good place to see the bride leave her carriage. I myself had been conversing with the pew-opener in the vestry, where the clerk was growing momently more impatient. He observed, with dignified indifference, that they had married so many people in their time, that he sees nothing in it—bless him, how it rains!

It did rain! Against the windows of the old church it drove so noisily that it almost drowned the stealthy voices of the whisperers in the gallery and vestry; it poured in a continuous stream from the spouts, and ran in the streets almost like a flood. It had

gone on raining in this way for three days, and people were almost justified in wondering whether it ever meant to stop; in all that time there had not been a gleam of sunshine, the spring flowers and budding trees looked drenched and spiritless; the very birds had ceased their song in the churchyard elms.

The pew-opener, never a person of lively disposition, kept one ear open to listen for the roll of the carriages, and talked, meanwhile, in a dreary strain of marriages that she had witnessed in that very place, and which had most of them, to her knowledge, turned out ill. She thought it a tempting of misfortune to choose a Friday in May for a wedding, when there are three hundred and sixty-five days in a year; and hoped it might turn out well, that was all. While she was detailing a disastrous story the clock struck eleven, and the clerk, observing that they could not be long now, admonished his colleague to be in readiness at the door to receive them. My gossip accordingly hobbled away, and I ensconced myself in a pew near the altar, already occupied by Miss Wolsey and Mrs. Briskett. The latter whispered to me that she hoped it would clear at noon, as it often does, she has remarked, but Miss Wolsey shook her head, and said she saw no chance of it. There were a many people in the church in their worst bonnets and cloaks, whose umbrellas hung dripping in tiny rivulets over the floor; every body was very silent as if oppressed by the weather, and unable to get up the slightest festal expression.

Presently entered Dr. Wyatt and Mr. Collins, streaming wet. The pew-opener marshalled them to the vestry, whence they issued fully robed, and took their seats within the altar rails. The people were more still than ever; there was quite a dead hush in the church; you might have heard a pin fall. A quarter past eleven struck —half past. Dr. Wyatt whispered to the clerk, who went solemnly out into the rain bareheaded, and returned sleeking down his hair, to say quite audibly, "No." But before he had time to get back to his place, Miss Prior scuttered in noisily on pattens, and whispered very loud, "They are coming!" Immediately there was a commotion all over the church; people got up and sat down again, and coughed, and then hastily settled themselves as the first detachment of the wedding party appeared and walked down the aisle. There was Sir Bertram Sinclair, the bridegroom, as upright and proud as ever, with his restless bright eyes glancing hither and thither, his grey curls brushed up fiercely, and his moustache twitching over his thin lips; young Philip Wilton, and two strange gentlemen with supercilious eyes. Then came old Captain Wilton, with his daughter on his arm, and Mistress Priscilla Cooke, her old nurse, following. I never saw people come to a wedding in such a way before—not a single bridesmaid or female friend!

The ceremony began, Dr. Wyatt reading it very slowly, solemnly, and deliberately, and giving to every word its awful weight. It almost made me ill to look at Mary Wilton. We had heard whispers that she did not love Sir Bertram, and that threats had driven her into making what, in a worldly sense, everybody called a great match. She was covered from head to foot with a fine lace veil, and her face looked like marble through it. She stood rather far apart from Sir Bertram, and I noticed that her whole frame quivered like aspen leaves in wind, as the Doctor said, "I charge you both (as you shall answer at the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed) that if either of you know any impediment why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, ye do now confess it." Everybody saw and noticed how she trembled. The Doctor made a pause of unusual length, as if anticipating some interruption, but at last he continued, and Sir Bertram's sonorous "I will," came out with a jerk as if the question took him unawares; nobody, though they listened breathlessly, could hear Mary Wilton's voice, but I saw her lips move, and noticed the almost convulsive shudder that shook her as the ring was slipped upon her finger; Sir Bertram held her hand so firmly that the slender fingers must have been almost crushed in his grip, and for a second she seemed to try to draw them away, and turned her head to old Priscilla Cooke, who was crying behind her. In a few minutes more the ceremony was ended, and they all went into the vestry to sign the book.

Then Mrs. Briskett remarked to me that the sun had not come out, and that it was raining faster than ever. There were no congratulations or hand-shakings in the vestry, and in a very little while Sir Bertram and Lady Sinclair issued forth, he holding her hand upon his arm, as if force were necessary to keep it there, and she, with her head declined upon her breast, and a face like pale marble. Those who saw it said, that when put into the carriage, she laid her hand upon the handle of the door, as if to escape, and that Sir Bertram drew her back, and she shrank into the furthest corner, and began to sob and shriek wildly as they drove to the gloomy old house in Manor House Yard.

As we crossed the market-place home the bells rang out so loudly, tunefully, and merrily, that we were half-cheated into the belief that we had been witnessing a happy marriage. The merry marriage-bells! They should toll for such a bridal instead of sending lying echoes of joy up heavenwards, where the angels may be weeping over it. How often do the flowers lift their heads to hearken to such music when it would be

better if they were blossoming on the bride's grave!

Spite of the weather, many little committees were held that afternoon in the Milverston drawing-rooms to take the day's event into consideration. We all talked over Captain Wilton's coming to the town four years previously, with his two young children, and calculated that Lady Sinclair could not be eighteen. The captain had held aloof from society, and was avowedly poor; nobody knew him intimately, or his daughter or son, but their affairs had been much discussed. We had expected a marriage the year before, for Mary Wilton was often seen in the Manor Gardens, with a handsome officer who came down for frequent but short visits to her father's house. His name was Captain Moore. We chose to fancy they were engaged, and to feel an interest in them; but at last Miss Prior told us that we were all wrong, for Mary Wilton was going to marry Sir Bertram Sinclair of Winnington Castle, and that Captain Moore was on his way to India. And the event proved her information correct.

In these cases there is always a train of circumstances which no curiosity can penetrate. Gossip exhausted itself, but nothing more could we ascertain than we had actually seen. Sir Bertram and Lady Sinclair went abroad, and the castle was filled with workmen and upholsterers making preparations for their return. Captain Wilton and his son were often there superintending and giving orders; since his daughter's great marriage, the old man held his head higher than ever. He was as proud a man to the full as Sir Bertram.

St. Mary's bells welcomed them home in August. Everything was done in order: there was a procession of tenantry to meet them, and great preparations for rejoicing, but it was generally remarked that Sir Bertram looked very ill—when people said a Sinclair "looked ill," we all knew well enough what was meant. There was insanity in the family: he himself, when quite a young man, had been for three years under medical surveillance abroad. It was a thing only whispered, but everybody was perfectly aware of the fact. Of course, all the neighbourhood called at Winnington Castle, but no visits were either received or returned. A confidential physician came from abroad and took up his residence there, and by-and-by it oozed out that Sir Bertram was so unwell as to be confined to his apartments. We met Lady Sinclair occasionally driving about in a pony carriage with her father and brother; she looked an icy, suffering, patient creature tired with struggling against sorrow, and passively enduring it. Her beauty was faded and almost gone—as well it might be—if half of what was said of Sir Bertram were true, she must have had a terrible time with him abroad. People said that he would never recover, that his present attack was far worse than the former one, and that the servants were all leaving Winnington; nobody could support its dreariness; fine as it might be within, it looked a great, dreary prison-house outside.

The poor old captain had lost a good deal of his haughty looks before Christmas came. Nobody could help but pity him, he seemed so downcast and miserable. The marriage had been his doing, and now that he saw what was come of it, and that his daughter was sacrificed to a madman, his late remorse must have been keen indeed.

"What else could anybody expect who was so rash as to marry on a Friday in May?" was Miss Wolsey's remark. She was superstitious and romantic, being much given to literature of that order, and attributed all the Winnington Castle troubles to the unfortunate selection of the wedding-day. There was a better reason than that. Pride and mercenary feelings were what urged Captain Wilton to force Mary into the union, when he knew that Sir Bertram's peculiarities were always verging on mental disease; Mary herself knew it, and resisted steadfastly until who can tell what motives were urged to drive her into the sacrifice of her whole life. Captain Moore gone,—her home poor, lonely, uncheered by love—for her father was a surly, self-concentrated man, and her brother a weak, simple lad—even a marriage with Sir Bertram might look less terrible in contemplation: how she regarded it when close at hand, her strange behaviour at her marriage betrayed but too clearly.

But to end this story quickly, for it is a very melancholy one. In January Lady Sinclair was confined of a still-born son, whose birth she survived only a few hours. She was buried with great funeral pomp in the chapel vault at Winnington Castle, and thus closed the last scene of a great match.

Sir Bertram has been removed abroad, it is said to Paris, and Captain Wilton also has left Milverston. The castle is shut up, and everything about it is going to rack and ruin.

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A CAMPAIGN WITH THE FRENCH.

SOME few years ago, I spent twelve months in the colony of Algeria. The reasons that took me to that somewhat out-of-the-way place were, first a disinclination to return to India (where the cavalry regiment in which I held a commission was stationed) before my furlough had expired; and secondly, a wish to see something of the manner in which our neighbours took the field against their enemies the Bedouins. Happening to spend a few weeks at a sea-bathing place on the east coast of France, I formed some acquaintances among the officers of a regiment which had just returned from Algiers, and the accounts those gentlemen gave me of their adventures, determined me to visit northern Africa. To return to London; to obtain leave from the Horse Guards to proceed to my destination; to pack up a suit or two of uniform, and furnish myself with the necessary passport and letters of credit, occupied no more than a fortnight. In six weeks from the day when the idea of going to Algiers had first entered my head, I found myself walking about the streets of Constantine, having already paid a flying visit to Phillipville, and the capital of the colony. I wanted to see how the French troops took the field, what amount of baggage their generals allowed to accompany the columns in a campaign, and in what manner their soldiers, officers, and superior commanders, overcame those difficulties which I knew from experience were inseparable from active warfare.

There are for ever military expeditions being sent against refractory Arab tribes, and one of these was on the point of starting from Constantine into the far interior, shortly after my arrival at that place. The officer who was to proceed in command of the party, was a Lieutenant-General to whom I had brought a letter of introduction, and I had no sooner expressed a wish to accompany the detachment, than he met me more than half-way, and insisted upon my being his guest as long as I remained with the troops in the field. The expedition was expected to be absent from Constantine about six months, and the commander warned me that when once we got a certain distance from the comparatively settled districts, there would in all probability be no chance of my returning to the colony until the troops should come back, since, without a strong guard and great precaution, it was impossible to pass through certain tracts of country, which were invested by marauding Arabs.

The precise objects or intentions of the campaign I never could exactly make out; nor, indeed, did I much care to know. Various officers belonging to the detachment, endeavoured to impress upon me a detailed account of the rascalities and disloyalties of certain chiefs, against whom we were about to move; but I never could get a clear idea of the affair. It was enough for me to know that the first gentleman into whose neighbourhood we were going was a certain Beni-something; who, with some hundreds of armed followers, had been plundering certain well-behaved tribes that were protected by the French authorities, and who paid their tribute regularly to the lawful officials of the Empire. This badly-behaved person lived, as I was informed, at a distance of sixty leagues—one hundred and eighteen miles—from the furthermost French outpost, and the latter half of the journey was across the branch of a desert, where water was only procurable in small quantities. The strength of the small brigade was about two thousand five hundred men. Of these, six hundred were infantry of the line, three hundred belonged to the now celebrated corps of Zouaves, four hundred were hussars who but a few months before had been doing duty in Paris, and three hundred were Chasseurs d'Afrique. In addition to this force, we had some two hundred Spahis, or native cavalry, under the command of French officers, and as many more men belonging to those admirably organised and most useful corps, the Equipage Militaires (transit corps), the Corps d'Ouvriers (works corps), and the Ambulance. Of artillery we had some dozen or so of light field-pieces; for in these expeditions against the Arab tribes, the French commanders trust almost entirely to infantry and cavalry; the enemy generally keeping at too great a distance from big guns to make any sort of projectile that can be used from them (except shells) of little avail.

To the eye of a soldier there could hardly be a more pleasing sight, than that expeditionary column, as it filed out of Constantine a little before sunrise one splendid morning in January. I had previously served in India under Sir John Keane, General Nott, Lord Gough, and Sir Charles Napier, and had witnessed some magnificent bodies of troops take the field; but I had never seen so workmanlike a brigade before.

First came the infantry with their brown faces, small useful kepi on the head, and light grey capôtes, or great-coats, with the skirts turned back to give greater freedom in walking. We laugh at French troops for putting on their watch-coats to march and fight in; but the practice is not without considerable advantage. This coat makes the coolest and most pleasant garment for the weary pedestrian, while his regular uniform is lighter to carry on his back, and is saved a great deal of wear and tear. Another peculiarity of the French infantry is, the red trouser being always tucked into the gaiter on the line of march. This, too, is a great help in walking, for nothing can be more annoying than the dangling leg of a loose trouser during a long day's march.* In rear of the regular infantry, came the Zouaves, then in succession the artillery, Chasseurs d'Afrique, hussars, spahis, and the various equipages militaires. What struck me most forcibly when witnessing the march of this column, was the smallness of the amount of baggage, the completeness and compactness of all the auxiliaries, and the perfect order with which every department was conducted. I had previously seen in India—and latterly have much oftener witnessed in the Crimea—how everything connected with the comforts, the feeding, and the general care of our men when in the field, was left to chance. When commanding in Scinde, the late Sir Charles Napier endeavoured to organise a baggage corps, and to introduce something like order and regularity into the various departments which administer to the well-being of the soldier when in the field; but he did not take much by his move. He raised against himself a host of enemies; who, in the long run, proved mighty to torment one of the best soldiers that ever wore the English uniform.

Of military mismanagement in the Crimea we have all heard enough. Who that has witnessed the scene, can ever forget the crushing, crowding, confusion, and swearing exhibited amongst the followers, baggage, and commissariat of an Indian army when moving? The immense quantity of private baggage allowed, the innumerable non-combatants in the shape of native private servants with their families and their followers, is fabulous. I remember, in eighteen hundred and thirty-eight—nine, during Sir John Keane's campaign into Affghanistan, the average number of camels which each officer of the regiment I then belonged to had for his own use, was no less than eight, whilst the native camp followers of the corps were in the proportion of five to every effective sabre in our ranks. How differently they manage these matters in Algeria! I am speaking within bounds, in declaring that the whole baggage of the two thousand men—starting into the desert upon a six months' campaign, and having to carry every necessary as well as every comfort of life with them—was not equal to one half of what followed my own single regiment, when it took the field against the Sikhs in eighteen hundred and forty-five.

But more surprising still, was the admirable order, regularity, and method which pervaded every department of the baggage. When the column started in the morning, every mule was in its place, and marched close up to the rear of the troops. The consequence was, that when we got into the enemy's country, a very small body of soldiers sufficed to protect it against the Arabs. On the line of march every mule kept its place; and, if wanted in a hurry, could be found instantly. The difference between this orderly proceeding and the confusion that exists among the camels, bullocks, carts and drivers appointed to carry military baggage in India, led me to make some inquiries on the subject. I found that each military division of the French army has attached to it three companies of equipages militaires; two of these companies being composed of men to lead, look after, and if necessary defend against the enemy, the baggage mules; the third company being composed of mounted men, some of whom act as postilions; while others guard and keep in order the various carts, waggons, and ambulances on the march. With our division there were rather more than four hundred mules, including the spare animals and those destined to carry the sick and wounded. The equipages militaires are commanded by officers of various ranks, who have under them subalterns and other subordinates. These gentlemen take as much pride in the condition of their mules, and the regularity and order kept by the baggage on the line of march, as any captain of our Life Guards takes in the general appearance of his men and horses at a review in Hyde Park. This appreciation of work, be it ever so humble, is a most remarkable and striking characteristic of the French service. In our own army we are too apt to look down upon the commissariat, and other administrative departments connected with our troops. Unless an officer or soldier belongs to the fighting portion of the forces, we regard him as a being who has a questionable right to wear uniform. No such preposterous nonsense is to be found among the French. Who does not recoil with horror on reading descrip-

* See "Insularities," volume the Thirteenth, page the First.

tions of the retreat from Cabool? Yet, had a tithe of the order and regularity maintained among the French military baggage animals been enforced among our Indian troops, a large portion of the Cabool army would have made their way in safety to Jellalabad, where General Sale was waiting for them.

Half an hour before dawn, the first notes of a bugle are heard from the tent of the chef-d'-état-major; and, five minutes after, all the drums in camp begin a noise enough to awaken the dead. Before leaving the ground, each soldier is furnished with a cup of excellent black coffee (that is to say, coffee without milk); and, in half an hour, all the small tents d'abri are struck, packed on the men's shoulders, the baggage animals loaded, the men in their places, and the word Mar-r-r-r-r-ch given, with that peculiar prolonged sounding of the letter r, which every French officer adopts when shouting the word of command.

The moment the troops move off, the band of the leading regiment strikes up, and plays a lively military march for a half a mile or so. When the musicians are tired the corps of drummers (the French have no fifers) begins its rub-adub, and works away in right good earnest, while the column gets over another mile or so.

The regimental bands of the French army are admirably managed. In Algeria they are as well kept up—the musicians quite as numerous, the music is as well played, the instruments are as good, and the band-masters as excellent—as if the regiment were stationed in Paris. In our own army, government merely provides the men for the band; the expense of teaching them, of their instruments, of their clothing, and their extra pay, falling entirely on the officers. To such gentlemen as have nothing but their pay to depend upon, this is a heavy tax; but it is a part of the magnificent How not to do it, of the long line of Barnacles. Moreover, an English regiment is only allowed to employ one sergeant and fourteen privates as musicians; so that in case of three or four happening to fall sick, or of the player of a leading instrument dying, the whole band is for the time useless. In a French corps, the musicians number between forty and fifty; the entire expense of the establishment being borne by the government. The Chef de Music, or band-master, is invariably a gentleman of considerable musical attainment, who ranks as a sub-lieutenant in the regiment. Nor can the expense of these military bands be considered as money wasted. The cheering effects of the music on the men, and the manner in which it seems to make them forget their troubles and hardships during active field service, must be witnessed before it can be fully appreciated. We had two bands with our column, one belonging to the infantry, and one to the hussars. One or other of these kept playing from time to time, so that in the course of each morning's march we were seldom more than a quarter of an hour without music.

One hour after the start from camp, a halt was invariably directed. The men piled their arms, fell out of the ranks, lighted their pipes, munched the loaves of bread, or the pieces of biscuit in their havresacks; and, if they had money, or credit, obtained a small—very small—glass of brandy from one of the vivandières; who, also, had bât-mules, from which they supplied the officers with snacks, and—although the halt only lasted twenty minutes—even prepared small cups of hot coffee. Officers then lighted their cigars or pipes, and chatted in groups until the drums summoned them to their posts, when the bands struck up, and we were once more on the tramp, greatly refreshed by our brief rest.

Although considered no mean pedestrian, either on a Scotch moor, or in an Indian jungle, I found myself no match at marching with the regimental infantry officers of the French army. They never ride on the line of march, as is almost the invariable rule in India. With the cloak rolled up, savage fashion, and slung over the left shoulder, these gentlemen trudge along by the side of their men; field-officers alone being mounted. The French say, and not without some reason, that captains and subalterns should show those under their command an example in bearing fatigue.

At the end of the second hour's march another halt was called; but, this time, only for five minutes; when off we went again. By the time three hours had passed, the sun was generally pretty high, and very hot. I can say with truth, that I never felt the effects of heat upon the head during a march in India, as I have in the interior of Algiers; yet the Frenchmen, officers and soldiers, never appeared to feel it in the least. Occasionally, a mule carrying the cacolets (a sort of arm-chair slung on each side of a mule, which thus carries a couple of sick men), were sent for from the rear, and a soldier, dead-beat from heat or fatigue, was placed upon it. This, however, was quite an exceptionable case, and no man ever fell out during a morning's march; which, although it would have sent half an English battalion into hospital, never appeared to affect these tough little Frenchmen in the least. For this there must be a cause, or rather more than one cause; and, from the experiences of nearly twenty years in our own service, I am led to the following conclusions:

The French dress their troops for service and for use: not for parade or show. It is true that the French soldier carries a great weight about him; but the articles with which he is loaded tend more or less to his comfort in the camp. He knows this, and never dreams of complaining. The tent d'abri, or small kind of gipsy-tent, is carried among

three men. It is pitched in five minutes, and serves every purpose of protection against either night air, sun, or moderate rain. Then, again, the French soldier's bill-hook, axe, and spade, serve to dig trenches round his tent in bad weather, and help to provide him with fire-wood wherewith to cook his food. In other respects his health is looked after, although he is most carefully taught to depend upon his own good sense, and his own exertions, less than upon what his superiors or the commissariat can do for him. He is a very much less helpless being than his English comrade, and his officers have consequently far less—indeed, I may say, none—of the fiddle-faddle work in camp, billets or quarters, which is annoying to our captains and subalterns, and worrying to our men. An English soldier is everlastingly being inspected by some person or other. The corporal of his squad inspects him and his food to see that one is fitly dressed to sit down to dinner, and the other fitly cooked to be wholesome. Then the orderly sergeant inspects the whole company—men and dinners. After that the orderly officer inspects the meal of the whole corps, and finally the captain of the day has his turn of inspecting the messing of the regiment. In many corps, by way of adding to the comforts of the Sunday dinners, each of the two majors inspects the meals of half the regiment, whilst the colonel inspects all round the barracks of the regiment. Judge what comfort the poor soldier must have with his dinner, after all this formal worry and bother is over! The French have none of this. The men are taught to rely on themselves, to cook their own dinner in comfort and as well as circumstances will allow, and the consequences are, that off parade themselves and their officers are much less worried about trifles than is the case in the English arm

Another circumstance which tends much to render the French soldier hardy, and which is certainly of the greatest service to him in a climate like that of Algeria, is his temperance. During a service of fifteen years in India, few men exposed themselves more to the sun in following field sports than myself, and I never had a day's sickness which could be attributed to that pursuit. Judging from myself, and from others who have at various times been my companions in the army, I attribute the impunity with which I braved the effects of heat entirely to my never tasting spirits. The French soldier certainly takes his petit verre once or twice in the day; but, to this day, in India, a soldier's daily allowance of Bengal rum or arrack, when on the line of march, would more than three parts fill an ordinary dinner tumbler. This too of a spirit compared with which the most fiery compounds of the lowest London public-house is as mild as milk. If any one doubts what effect this diurnal dose of spirits would have upon men called upon to endure great fatigue under a tropical sun, let him try the experiment in London during the dog-days.

Another reason in my mind for the health of French troops in the field, is the comparatively few men who constitute each mess, and the excellence of their cookery.

The distance we got over each day, varied from twelve to eighteen English miles, and the time occupied was from four to six hours. Sometimes, to get over long tracts of country where there was no water, we had night marches, which I shall describe by-and-by. As a general rule we arrived at the new encamping-ground about eleven o'clock, and always found that the place had been marked out previously by an officer of the état-major; who, with his mounted orderlies and his Arab guides, had preceded the troops by a couple of hours. Once arrived, camp-guards were immediately formed, with care; with equal care whether we were near an enemy or not. Here, too,—although to civilians this may appear a matter of no moment—the French exhibit their forethought, and the care they take of their men without appearing to do so. In the English service the men for guard are taken indiscriminately from the ten, twelve, or fourteen companies which compose the regiment—so many from each company—so that their rations and dinners have to be brought to them from so many different parts of the corps; in the French army a whole company goes on guard together. Thus, not only can the men carry on their cooking as usual, but the officers and sergeants go on duty with their own men, and have thus much better opportunities of knowing what each soldier is capable of performing, and how each one may be entrusted to guard a post of danger.

The troops pitched their camp with marvellous celerity. I am within the mark when I say that in ten minutes after our halt every tent was ready, and that in another quarter of an hour, the cooking-pots were in full operation. The camp-kitchens which the soldiers dug in the ground, were most ingenious contrivances, both to economise fuel and to prevent the wind getting at the fire. One hour after the camp was formed, the drum sounded for breakfast. A great wonder to me—who had long been accustomed to see our own soldiers devour their ill-dressed, half-raw food—was the savoury messes which the French soldiers managed to produce, with very slight means. The meat served out to them was almost invariably mutton; beef being rare in the north of Africa. By mixing with their meat a large portion of bread or biscuit, and pepper, salt, and vegetables when procurable, they managed to produce a most savoury dish.

The march being over, the men were left almost entirely to themselves. There was none of that everlasting looking after them which is so wearing to all ranks in the English service. Among the French

officers camp-life was by no means an unpleasant existence. There is no regimental mess amongst the officers as with us; each individual being left to feed himself as best suits his inclination or his pocket. Different ranks never mix together at the dinner-table; and, in camp, the general rule seemed to be for half a-dozen subalterns or as many captains to form a mess. The superior officers kept to themselves, and those of the same regiment in most instances took their meals together. To me, these small re-unions were particularly pleasant and the simple inexpensive manner in which all the officers lived—while everything they had was particularly good of its kind—was much more agreeable than the military messes of our own service. The dinner hour was shortly after dusk. Between the two meals some few officers generally left the camp in search of sport! but the majority appeared to have their time fully taken up in study. They all kept official journals of the country we marched through, and they planned or drew out maps and routes as they went along. These pursuits are somehow connected with their future advancement in the service; although I cannot remember in what way. I know that any officer who wants to get on in the French army, must furnish his superiors with proof that his eyes are not always shut.

And I know that his profession is his pride and his business on this earth—not a bore, to be escaped from, and given the go-by to.

About three weeks after starting upon our expedition, I had an opportunity of seeing a skirmish between French troops and the Arabs, or Bedouins. The general having received information that a hostile tribe had attacked the tents of a chief whose followers were tributary to the French government and had driven off their flocks, detached two squadrons of Chasseurs d'Afrique in pursuit. I asked permission to accompany the party, and leave was freely granted. The enemy was said to be thirty leagues, or ninety miles, ahead of us, and to be rapidly making their way to the far-off desert. Within an hour from the time the order had been given, the detachment was ready. It started from the camp without tents of any kind, with no baggage animals beyond what were absolutely necessary to carry food for the men, and which were all so lightly laden as to be able to keep up with the cavalry. The latter numbered two hundred, all of whom were Frenchmen. Hitherto, I had always considered the irregular horsemen of Hindustan the finest light cavalry in the world for such expeditions, but I was soon convinced that the Chasseurs d'Afrique were much superior in all the best qualifications for light troops to any I had yet seen.

Never in my life did I see such soldiers as these to endure fatigue, heat, hunger, thirst; while taking the greatest possible care of their horses, and keeping themselves merry, and in good health. We started at sunset; and, by sunrise the next morning, had got over eighty miles of ground. Here we halted at some wells, watered and fed the horses, let the men cook and eat a meal, and started again so as to overtake the Arabs when they halted for their mid-day rest. On approaching their tents, we found the whole tribe ready to give battle, rather than relinquish their ill-gotten wealth of goats, sheep, mares and horses. The skirmishers of our party were fired upon; and the enemy, numbering rather more than double our number, came forward with shouts of defiance. There was no help for it but to shed blood. As the robbers kept in small parties of threes and fours, and were greatly scattered over the plain, a charge en masse of our two squadrons would have been absurd. The Chasseurs d'Afrique are armed with swords, pistols, and long light carbines, which they carry slung behind their backs. It was with the last weapon that the advanced half squadron—detached as skirmishers—commenced the fight, and the execution they did with their fire-arms from horseback surprised me. It was, at first, a battle of mounted sharpshooters against the same description of troops. The bravado and daring of the enemy reminded me forcibly of the Affghans. In a very short time the Arabs began to diminish considerably, and we could see many making off slowly to the rear badly wounded. Gradually they began to draw more together, and at last nearly a hundred and fifty horsemen were assembled in a body. The officer commanding our party seized the proper moment, and with his reserve squadron charged at the enemy. A hand to hand fight ensued, but was over in ten minutes; the Arabs taking flight in all directions. The chasseurs pursued them for some distance, until recalled by repeated sounds of the trumpet; when the whole force was mustered, and it was found that we had lost six troopers killed, besides about a dozen wounded; the Arabs having left twenty dead, and some fifty prisoners in our hands.

These prisoners were bold, daring fellows. The sheep, camels, and horses which they had carried off, were recovered very near the spot where the fight had taken place, and were made over to a party of their rightful owners who had accompanied us in our hasty march from the main column. The plunderers had neither women nor children with their party; having left them at a place of safety many miles off. The wounded were well looked after by the medical officers; and, after a halt of four-and-twenty hours, the troops were once more ready to take the road. Upon leaving the head-quarters of the

division two or three days previously, we had moved off at nearly a right angle from the intended route of the larger body of troops. The latter had, meantime, pushed on by forced marches, to prevent certain disturbances amongst the tribes; so that, when our work with the marauding party was over, we were at a distance of two hundred and fifty miles from where it was supposed the general's camp would be found. We moved at the rate of fifty miles a-day, and in five days rejoined the column. This, together with our previous march, made about three hundred and thirty miles. Including a halt of twenty-four hours, the distance was performed in seven days; yet we returned to camp with only one sore back among the two hundred horses, and not a single man or beast on the sick-list, except such as had been wounded by the enemy.

When this statement is compared with the condition in which our cavalry returned to Lord Raglan's head-quarters after Lord Cardigan's reconnaissance into the Dobrudschka, it will appear incredible that such different results could ensue from two somewhat similar trials of strength on the part of European dragoons. But the fact is, as JACOB OMNIUM has stated it to be, we have really no English light cavalry. The Chasseurs d'Afrique are not better mounted, nor are they better horsemen than our own men; but they are very much lighter, and are furnished with nothing that is not absolutely necessary for their efficiency. With saddle, bridle, and all other accoutrements and arms, they weigh on an average fourteen stone English measurement; whereas the regiment of light dragoons with which I served through three campaigns in India, averaged in marching order very nearly nineteen stone. When this enormous difference is taken into consideration, all wonder must cease if our cavalry are found to fail in efficiency when sent upon active service. The Chasseurs d'Afrique I look upon as almost the beau-ideal of light cavalry.

Shortly after we rejoined the head-quarters of the column, an example of how horses can be protected in wet weather, when in the field, was practically illustrated by the French cavalry. Owing to some information respecting the movements of certain tribes, it became necessary for the general to make a detour into the hills with the whole of his infantry: leaving the cavalry—eight hundred in number—to guard a pass or entrance into a plain, so as to cut off the retreat of the enemy, should they be driven in that direction. Expecting to witness some fighting in the plain, I remained with the cavalry; although it was considered certain that our portion of the force would not have to move from their pickets for a week or ten days, as it would take the infantry at least that time to effect the object for which they went into the mountains.

The very day after the general left us, a storm came on. Our Arab guides, as well as the French officers who had any experience in the country, declared that there was every indication of the bad weather lasting some time, and advised the commanding officer to shelter his horses in the way best calculated to protect them against wind and rain. The quickness and systematic manner in which the men commenced, under directions from their officers, to dig out temporary stables—if what did duty as such can be called by that name—was, what an American would call "a caution." During the last few months I have often thought it would have been well if some of our cavalry generals had received a few lessons from these French dragoons before taking commands in the Crimea. The commencement of the undertaking was marking out in white lines the length and breadth of the intended pits in which the horses were to be placed. This was done in about an hour. Then the men began in earnest to dig as if making the foundations for a street of houses. In twelve or fourteen hours every horse in the detachment was well protected against the weather. The animals stood in a space sunk some three feet below the level of the ground, which was sloped as well as drained, so that it would retain no water. The spare earth turned up from these places was plastered into a rude wall to windward; so that the horses were protected up to their chests from the weather, although there was neither the time nor the materials to cover them in overhead. The precaution had not been taken in vain; for a more fearful storm than that which burst over our heads before the job was over, or a more lasting soaking rain than that which then commenced and continued for four days, it was never my fate to encounter. Had the horses been left unprotected, they would have all broken away. As it was, when the bad weather came to an end, they were one and all in as good condition as if they had just come out of the best stables in France.

The enemy which the infantry portion of our column had hoped to drive out upon the plain from their mountain fastness, proved too cunning for the general. They escaped, and never came near the cavalry which was waiting to give them a reception. The consequence was, that we who had been waiting for some days at the mouth of the pass, received an order to make a detour, and rejoin the head-quarters of the column at a place some thirty or forty miles off. This was accomplished without delay, and in the course of two days after leaving the place where our temporary stables had been dug out, we rejoined the general and the force under his command.

Here began a portion of the expedition which I enjoyed excessively. The main body of the troops only moved camp, while small parties of one and two hundred men were absent occasionally to collect tribute from the tribes.

So far as I could judge, the imposts did not appear severe, nor were harsh measures used to collect them. For many miles around our camp, the Arabs were all friendly to the French, and this gave many of us an opportunity of enjoying the sports of the field. As a general rule, however, French officers are seldom sportsmen.

At length the whole force was ordered to march against a fort, in which a rebellious Arab chief had shut himself up, bidding defiance to the French authorities. As it was important to surprise the enemy, we started at sunset, and had invested the place by daylight. Expecting to find merely a small village, with perhaps loop-holed walls, I was much surprised to see a town of considerable size, with a strong mud wall, and with outworks to defend the angles. The Arabs, however, appear to resemble Asiatics in some points; one of which is invariably to overlook some weak point in the construction of their forts. With a soldier's eye, the general commanding at once saw that a hill in the immediate vicinity of the town, would give him the command of the whole place. After the men had breakfasted, an assault was ordered on this spot, and carried by a coup de main; the party of the enemy who defended it making good their retreat to the town. Seeing, too late, the intentions of the French, the Arab chief came out to give us battle; and, as the greater part of our force was engaged in watching the other side of the town, and as the general had only sent some three hundred men up the hill, the French were at first both outflanked and outnumbered. They stood their ground well, and fought manfully; but the Arabs pressed on them very hard, and their losses began to be serious. While this was going on up the hill, I was witness of several hand-to-hand fights in various parts of the field, and certainly, whatever other troops may be, French soldiers are not wanting in courage or daring. Every man among them appears to have visions of the legion of honour before his eyes; and, in battle he does his utmost to obtain it. Still, on occasions where perfect order, great silence, and most implicit obedience are required, I would rather command English than French troops.

During the fight on the hill, I witnessed a remarkable act of self-devotion on the part of a sergeant of Zouaves. The enemy held a small redoubt, to take which became of vital importance to the French. The enclosure was a loop-holed wall about seven feet high, from inside of which, some forty or fifty Arabs shot down the French as fast as they could load and fire. A hundred men of the Zouaves were ordered to assault the place. They attempted three times to do so; but failed each time. Their captain was killed, and both their other officers wounded; while nearly a third of their number were speedily placed hors de combat. Every man who attempted to get over the wall was killed on the spot; and the remainder of the party began to show symptoms of hesitation. Perceiving this, a young sergeant turned round to his comrades and said, "Take me upon your shoulders, and throw me over the wall; I shall be killed, but the rest of the men will scramble after me somehow, in spite of the bullets." This, after some remonstrance was done. The man was thrown over; and, in less time than it takes to write these lines, his companions followed him in, and held possession of the place. Strange to say, the sergeant—a volunteer of respectable family—although severely wounded, was not killed. Some six months after this event I heard that he had been immediately promoted, and had also had the cross of the legion of honour conferred upon him. I wonder what would have become of such a sergeant in England!

After the fighting before the walls of the place had lasted several hours, it was soon evident that the discipline and valour of the French would prevail. The enemy managed early in the day to get their women and children sent off; and, finding themselves beset on all sides, vacated the place under cover of the night. The route they had taken into the mountains was totally inaccessible for cavalry, and our infantry were too much fatigued with their long march and subsequent hours of fighting to follow. A few prisoners were made, but there were no men of any importance among them.

Some days after this affair, I received letters from England which obliged me to hasten my return home. An escort of Chasseurs d'Afrique happened to be returning towards Constantine, so I took advantage of the protection thus afforded me, and set off on my return. I left the French camp with a heavy heart, for I was truly sorry to part from men with whom I had passed many pleasant months, and from whom I had received much kindness. Few Englishmen have had my opportunities of seeing French troops in the field, and of belonging, as it were, for the time, to their own corps.

Unless a great deal has been of late months written and spoken in vain (which is lamentably probable), we ought to be on the eve of great changes in our own army. We have, near at hand, an excellent model by which to fashion any such alterations; and it is earnestly to be hoped that our alliance with France may pave the way for introducing into the service many alterations of which we stand vitally in need. It is true that we always learn something in each campaign, but would it not be better, if, having bought our experience at a very large price, we kept it by us instead of invariably throwing it away? I may be wrong, but it seems to me, that if a year hence

we were—which God forbid!—to engage in another war, it would be the old story of the Crimea in eighteen hundred and fifty-four and fifty-five over again. We do not appear to me, to be one iota more advanced in the very first principles of military organisation than we were ten years ago. It is but a month ago since a Royal Commission, with a noble duke at its head, was gravely ordered to inquire whether promoting officers because they are rich, and preventing those who are poor from rising in the army, is, or is not, of advantage to the service!

THE SCATTERING OF SEED.

Curious and remarkable facts, not so fallacious as Pitt thought them when applied to social subjects, have been gathered by naturalists and travellers about the way in which vegetation is continued and extended. Nature multiplies her stock of plants most commonly by seeds. Many which the gardener propagates only by cuttings and layers in their free state follow the usual method; some, like the lily of the valley, extend their dominion by creepers under the soil; others, like the verbena, by throwing out long shoots which produce roots at their joints. There is also, as most of our readers know, the singular mode of increase adopted by the Indian fig-tree. When sufficiently grown the branches let down fibres, which swing about freely in the breeze until they reach the ground, where they take root, and grow into thick pillars, which support the branches in their further growth. An Armenian merchant at Madras is said to have had one of these trees in his garden with thirty-eight stems firmly rooted in the ground, some of them nearly four feet thick and from thirty to fifty feet in height. So

> daughters grow
> About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade.

Some of the aged fig-trees of India, are said to cover as much as two acres of ground by the simple extension of branches, and regiments of soldiers have taken refuge under the shadow of a single tree.

In a seed, the mysterious origin of growth is a little morsel which, in its earliest hours of expansion, feeds upon the rest and greater portion of the seed; until it has shot forth a rootlet to gather for it nourishment out of the soil. Some seeds are very delicate, and will not live unless nursed in the warm bosom of the earth soon after separation from the mother plant. The germs of coffee, roses, laurels, and myrtles must be sown soon after gathering; and acorns brought from America are sown on board ship to save their life. Even hardy seeds generally seem to find in the ground the safest place of deposit. The self-sown mignonette, and many other garden flowers, come up much stronger in due season than the mignonette we take so much pains to sow, as we think, at the right time and in the proper way. Many garden beds would bring forth flowers in abundance if let alone, after having been once stocked with plants.

Of the greater number of seeds, it is to be said, however, that they are hardy and tenacious of life to a miracle. Gérardin speaks of a bag of seed of the sensitive plant brought to the Jardin des Plantes upwards of sixty years ago, which even now supplies good plants whenever it is used. Horne, the eminent naturalist, says that he found grains of corn which had been thrashed a hundred and forty years before, in possession of their living powers. Still more remarkable cases have been mentioned by others. M. Thouin sowed seeds of the climbing mimosa which he found under the roots of an old chesnut at Paris, and they germinated. Dr. Lindley speaks of finding raspberry seeds in a barrow, in company with a skeleton, with which coins of Hadrian's reign had been buried, yet this seed, which the testimony of the money proved to be sixteen hundred years old, had not lost its vitality. No doubt invariable temperature, freedom from damp, and the absence of the vital element of the air, was the cause of such extraordinary preservation in a dormant state. Under ordinary circumstances seeds have to put up with much rough treatment and exposure. Many are lost, and for such losses the supply leaves ample margin. The majestic Araucaria of Patagonia bears at the tips of its branches twenty or thirty fruits of one tree, and each fruit contains about three hundred kernels. Except by scattered families of the savage natives who are mainly supported by these fruits alone, and prize them so much as to forego political quarrels that they may be gathered, the country of the Araucaria is almost untrodden by man, and left to itself it has formed, according to the interesting account of Dr. Poeppig, immense forests, extending north and south for eight hundred miles. One of our own thistles is so prolific, that a single plant would by the second year be the progenitor of about five hundred and eighty millions of plants, if all the seeds were to strike root.

Some waste of material arises from the changeableness of seasons, or the unsuitableness of the spot upon which the seed happens to fall. Great is the care taken in bringing the seed to perfection, the most beautiful flower and delicious fruit are merely ministers to the necessities of the seed, and the microscope especially shows that the whole strength and powers of the plant are devoted to this one great object of perpetuation; but this exceeding care appears to end with the perfection of the germ. Some few tribes of plants are exceptions to this rule. The ivy-leaved toad-flax, the sow-bread or cyclamen, the subterraneous clover, and some others, carefully bury their seeds. The pretty cyclamen—common at gardeners'

stalls in the early spring—is a favourite flower, and its curious appearance with face turned to the mould, and rosy petals bent back that their beauty may not be altogether lost, is entirely owing to the habit of carrying the seeds to the ground. The clover, as the time of planting approaches, surrounds the seed-vessel with spiny projections, which protect the germs while digging their way down into the soil. Many seeds when ripe simply escape from the vessel in which they were born, and fall to the ground, and this is done so quietly by some as to make it not an easy matter to collect them. We all know how frequently mignonette seed escapes; the little bell in which the seeds are contained permitting them to fall as they are perfected.

The distribution of such seeds must be over a small space, unless they be taken from place to place by any accidental process. But there are, again, plants which distribute their seeds by mechanical force. The balsam and touch-me-not will, in this way cast their little seed many feet around. If the ripe pods of the touch-me-not be touched with the finger it will almost always fire a discharge of seed against the enemy. Those seeds which will bear soaking are frequently distributed by streams; land is continually being washed away from river banks or shores and thrown up again elsewhere. Thus Humboldt speaks of seeds, which must have been born by plants and trees in Jamaica and Cuba, appearing on the shores of the Hebrides. Bees and other insects do much planting. Sheep also, and other woolly animals collect seed as they go, and carry it about; in this way the seeds of agrimony are disseminated. But man is the chief planter; not to mention the roots and herbs which he has brought from afar for his daily food, the common groundsel which now comes up everywhere was brought from Asia with grain; and the Canadian fleabane, which is now to be seen all over France, Germany, Holland and Italy, was brought over from America and planted about a hundred years ago in Paris. Sea-weeds propagate their species in an extraordinary manner; indeed, they assume the character of animals rather than plants. Thanks to the beautiful aquarium, which is beginning to be popular, we may know more about water-weeds, but as yet they are little understood. They deserve careful attention; for not only do these useful things revivify the sea by pouring forth bubbles of vital air, but they supply man with dyes, with manure which gives the blessing of fertility to the poorest heath-land, and with useful salts. They supply the physician with a potent medicine, and even give us food in a few wholesome forms. In the sea-weeds we have the seeds crowded in cells on the tough leaf of the plant. They are very minute, and surrounded by hair gifted with vibratory motion when the little germs are about leaving home. In due time the cell bursts, and forth pours a future population—each seed with its moving hairs employed in rowing them away to a fit place of rest. An old observer who watched all this in a few weeds placed in a glass vessel for the purpose, remarks that the sudden emptying of the bags of seed causes a great commotion of the water in their neighbourhood; and the departure of the flocks appears to take place at fixed periods, generally betimes in the morning: one sea-weed choosing the hour of eight: another, daybreak.

One important agent in the sowing and distribution of seed is, of course, the wind; and those seeds which are intended to be blown abroad are either sufficiently light in themselves, or are assisted by a flying apparatus. We all understand how the seed is scattered from the feathery ball of the dandelion. This plant, excellent as salad, useful in medicine, and so much esteemed that people roast its roots as a substitute for coffee, is one of many which supply their seeds with an arrangement of feathery hairs. In all these, when the seeds are ripe, the case in which they are packed becomes exposed, releases its grasp of them, and yields them up to every passing breath. The cotton grass is supplied with so much of this feathery material as to give a character to the fields in which it grows. Mrs. S. C. Hall said she saw scores of bogs in Ireland looking like fields of snow, from the immense quantity of cotton-grass-down with which they were covered. Hedges in which travellers' joy is abundant, have a beautiful appearance at seed-time, owing to the silvery plume which appears on the fruit. There is one plant—the rose of Jericho—perfectly unique in its way of planting by the agency of wind. It grows in the driest deserts. When the seed is ripe, the branches wither and coil up into a ball; then, as the root has little hold of the ground, the wind easily tears it up and rolls it along until a moist spot is reached; the branches then unfurl, and, by this unfurling motion, are stopped; the seed-vessel bursts, and the germs are thus deposited where they can grow.

An immense number of seeds need none of these contrivances to help them on their way; their lightness and minuteness is astonishing. The spores of ferns are mere dust, those of the club-moss are but the eighteen thousandth of an inch in thickness. The toadstool family is still more notable for its small spores, and the immense numbers in which they are found in one plant. Fries tells us he counted—by a microscopic calculation—in a single fungus ten millions of spores, and they were so small as to form a mere cloud when stirred into the air. These lichens, mosses, and fungi, constituting the lower orders of vegetable society, seem in an especial manner capable of universal distribution.

The first vegetation which covers a volcanic mass, or a coral island, is composed of these lowest forms; Melville Island is yet in greater part covered by mosses—and Captain Ross in his South Polar voyage, noticed a dreary island, called by him New South Shetland, marked with patches of mosses, struggling for existence. They will grow where no other vegetation can exist, and when they die they lay the foundation of that good vegetable soil in which, in a succession of epochs, higher and more beautiful forms of vegetable life may find suitable support. Because of the exceeding lightness of these precious seeds, it is not difficult to understand how they may travel in currents of air many leagues over land and water before they settle. On the twenty-ninth of August, eighteen hundred and thirty, a lichen suddenly appeared among a plantation of pines in the neighbourhood of Dresden, covering the leaves on the side next the wind only; and at another time the sails of a ship at sea, near Stockholm, were in an instant covered also with a kind of lichen. This appearance—only to be explained on the supposition that the minute germs came floating invisibly upon the breeze—is said to be common in Persia, Armenia, and Tartary, where the people eagerly eat such lichens, saying that they come from heaven. If we venture for a moment to imagine the inexpressible number of spores which a year's growth must give to the world, it is not too much to say that they must be everywhere, and from their size penetrate into every place; even the stomachs and other parts of animals. This circumstance has been made the ground of a belief that the cholera might be attributable to the inhaling of fungi, the offspring of cesspools and other putrefying masses. So various are opinions on the origin and cause of that epidemic, that it is impossible to speak confidently on any one suggestion respecting it; but it is a matter of fact that, on the last occasion of that disease appearing among us, an immense quantity of microscopic fungi were found in the air. If they were like many of the larger examples of the order, extremely poisonous, it at least admits of being suggested, that those living in places where dense clouds were present, being in a state of body unable to resist their deleterious action, died from a form of poisoning. Mouldiness—the common term for minute fungous growth—is often found in such strange places as only the general and invisible dissemination of their spores can explain. Pots of jam and other domestic articles which the housewife most carefully ties up, often become the tracts upon which enormous forests of little fungi grow. They will grow also on the back of the gold-fish, and indicate its speedy death. Deslongchamps found mouldiness even in the air-cells of the eider duck.

It may create surprise that confusion does not follow from the planting of nature in this lavish manner. If seeds are so scattered and spread, how is it that everything is not trying to grow everywhere, so that nothing could grow anywhere? The reason is, that each plant thrives subject to its own conditions of soil, heat, and moisture. The coltsfoot is a sign of clayey soil, the orchis of a light one; the fern loves the damp, but a little too much moisture destroys the cactus. The latter is a grateful vegetation on hard, barren places in the tropics, as the rockrose and stonecrop are elsewhere. Rhododendrons and heaths like only the softest heath-mould. Every plant requires also a spot suited to the character of its growth, and without that cannot live; in many cases the seed will not even germinate. An uninformed gardener in the north of England, who received a larch fir, native of cool climates, and nursed it most carefully in a hothouse, soon found that it became a mere dry stick; it was cast upon the dunghill, which proved much more to its inclinations: there it soon began to grow again. Agriculturists pay respect to this natural system much to their pecuniary advantage; the grasses popular with them they divide into those suited to rich pastures, bogs, wet meadows, and sandy places. We are warranted in supposing that innumerable seeds of many plants are continually deposited in every spot, but that the surrounding circumstances permit only a few of them to germinate. The invariable rule of nature, for which we may be thankful, seems to be expressed in that form of words which has elsewhere passed into a political proverb, "The right man in the right place."

The chronicles of botany contain several cogent illustrations of the universal presence of seed. The decay of wheat was supposed to result from a mouldiness which supervened, until a microscopist detected on the grains of living wheat spores of fungi, evidently planted there against the day when the grain, losing its own vitality, suffered the spore to start into active life. It appears that the fungus needs for its growth the presence of decay, and that is the reason of its appearing suddenly in any place, and then as suddenly departing: it is a true scavenger.

There is a fact, well known to countrymen, that fields which have not been sown with clover, and have never borne crops of it at any time, may nevertheless be covered with it if they be manured with lime, which, soon becoming chalk, yields a soil in which all clover delights. An old writer records a curious instance of spontaneous growth, the evident result of a favourable change of circumstances acting on seed planted naturally. He says that during the famine in fifteen hundred and fifty-five, the seaside pea, an English flower, but not very common, appeared in such quantities near Dunwich in Suffolk, as to supply the food market, and

prevent many persons from perishing of hunger.

We are evidently ignorant of many ways in which the germs of vegetation are affected. Thus, the fungus is a mystery—change of soil is not all that affects it. Mushroom growers know that certain mixtures of matter exposed to particular states of atmosphere will increase that species, and none else. It has been suggested that electricity—an influence of which we know too little—plays a great part in the proceeding. Again, we see fungi which are peculiar to different substances. Cheese, grapes, potatoes, old leather, and other materials, when mouldy, always exhibit, each its own fungus, and no other. Now, although we may bear in mind that the distribution of spores is universal—that they are superior to changes which would kill higher vegetation, having been found alive even after a year's immersion in fluid, and can therefore bide their time—it is hard to conceive how one sort of fungus spore goes all over the world for cheese, and will not settle until it meets with cheese; while another travels with a like determination after an old shoe.

If we love mystery, we can appeal, on the origin of the lower plants, to curious investigations by German naturalists. Kützing considers that nature does not always plant particular eggs for each particular kind of vegetable; but the same general stuff will, he asserts, according to circumstances, throw up fungi, lichens, sea-weeds, or mosses. And it would appear, from the researches of the same philosopher, that at this period of nature's efforts, not only are the four families of plants just named interchangeable, but that the lowest forms of animal life are likewise convertible into those of the vegetable. He cut up a species of jelly-fish, and put the pieces into a bottle of distilled water, corking it closely. They soon putrefied, and finally dissolved; but after four days, myriads of little dots covered with hairs were seen moving about in the bottle; a swarm of green points on the surface of the water appeared next, which, through a lens, seemed to be those living dots glued to each other with slime; and, in a few weeks, a peculiar species of water-weed developed itself to perfection. Could the animal jelly-fish have turned into a water-weed?

MILVERSTON WORTHIES.

In passing by Miss Wolsey's shop yesterday, I perceived a frame full of likenesses hanging at the door-post. In the centre was the counterfeit presentment of Miss Wolsey herself, in all the crispness of Sunday silk gown and best cap; two military officers flanked her on either side; Mr. Garnet was over her head, and Mr. Dove below her feet, while four infantine groups occupied the angles.

So public an exposure of well-known characters surprised me. "Never, never," I said to myself, "would Lydia Cleverboots make her countenance the gazing-stock of a market-place!" And, with rather more than my usual severity, I entered the bun-shop to ask what it all meant? Miss Wolsey did not allow me time to open my mouth, but said:

"The celebrated photographic artist, Mr. Buck, is in the town, Miss Cleverboots. You must see him. You will be delighted."

I replied, "O, indeed!"

This simple exclamation, with the tone I threw into it, immediately checked Miss Wolsey's vivacity. She saw I was slightly ruffled, and she endeavoured to propitiate me by adding:

"There is no harm in it, Miss Cleverboots. Many respectable people have been done."

"No harm!" I ejaculated,—"no harm! when men in dignified professions, fathers of families (I alluded to Mr. Dove), allow themselves to be posted up on walls like sign-boards, or circus-bills! O, Miss Wolsey!" I have a respect for the woman, and I eyed her with a mild rebuke.

"I will have mine taken down, if you think it improper, Miss Cleverboots. I am sure I meant no offence to anybody," she said, sadly.

I did not suffer the impression I had made to pass away, but rejoined sharply, "When you are a public character, Miss Wolsey, then be exhibited, and not before;" and I walked with a firm step out of the shop.

At the corner by the church, I encountered Miss Prior, fresh from her early gossip. "Have you been done, my dear?" she exclaimed, without exchanging the usual compliments, "Isn't it marvellous?"

I asked stiffly, what she meant?

"From two-and-sixpence upwards, single figures; and every additional figure one shilling extra," was her reply. I wished her good morning; for she was in a gasping state of mental confusion, owing, probably, to an overfulness of news; and I walked on to Mr. Dove's.

Mrs. Dove was dressed to go out, with her tract-basket in her hand, and the two girls with their best hats, and baby in his feather and scarlet coat, were all undergoing a full parade examination previous to accompanying her. I saw at once some great undertaking was contemplated. Mrs. Dove is a favourite of mine. I knew her, an extremely pretty girl, before her marriage, and have always been in the habit of giving her advice about the training of her little ones (the eldest, Jenny Polly, is my godchild). Therefore I was not surprised when she exclaimed, grasping my hand in her cordial way:

"Dear Miss Lydia, I was just coming over to your house to consult you about the

children's pictures. Must I have them done in a group, or singly? Miss Prior has given me such an account of Mr. Buck's skill in taking babies, that I was determined little Alfy should be done too."

"The whole town seems to have run mad about these photographs," I replied. "Do you like such portraits? For my part, I think them very displeasing. All those exposed outside the bun-shop look as black as ink."

"Miss Prior said they were exquisite, and Mr. Dove was done yesterday. Go with us, Miss Lydia, and you will see. Miss Prior will be waiting for us there now, by this time. I told her to go and prepare Mr. Buck for the arrival of a party," said Mrs. Dove.

I consented.

The photographic apparatus was set up in Miss Wolsey's garden; a bit of ground about sixteen feet square. It consisted of a lofty board over which was stretched a white sheet; a kitchen-chair stood with its back to it, and, close by, a circular deal-table covered with a crochet-work anti-macassar. Opposite, was a machine supported on a sort of mahogany scaffold. It had one large round glass eye, with a huge black patch of cotton velvet hanging over it. I had never seen anything of the kind before; but, as I never display my ignorance except when I cannot help it, I looked round reflectively, and was silent. Not so the youthful Doves, whom Mr. Buck remarked, were not at all in a photographic humour; for they capered about like dancing-dolls, instead of being quite still. In one corner of the garden was a dejected plum-tree; and, on a bench beneath it, were two beehives, with all the bees in full buzz. Alfy wanted to touch them, and screamed for a full-sized bum-bee that had settled on Mr. Buck's bottle of what Miss Prior called the chemicals, until his distracted nurse pacified him with a bun, while Jenny Polly, and Lucy tugged at their mamma's skirts or made her the centre of a merry-go-round, and refused to be caught, to be inducted into the chair.

I perceived that somebody must take an initiatory step, for the artist stood looking gloomily bewildered in the confusion; therefore I went forward, announced that I would be done the first, and took my seat in the chair. I felt a curiosity to see my own features portrayed; for, though I have reached the seventh age of woman, I had never before been taken in any style.

The preparatory expectation was almost as bad as the agonizing moments spent in a dentist's parlour, after you have received the pleasing intelligence that he is engaged, but will attend to you in five minutes. Mr. Buck shut himself up in what I have every reason to believe was Miss Wolsey's coal-cellar; while, under Miss Prior's direction, I composed myself into an attitude: the left hand on my waist, the right resting gracefully on the anti-macassar. The artist soon reappeared, and performed certain mysterious evolutions, which Miss Prior said was focussing me. When I was focussed, he looked at me very intently, and said, "Now, ma'am, fix your eyes on this tree-trunk, and do not move them in the least: now!"

I do not mind confessing that I expected a flash, as of lightning, to burst upon my face when the great black velvet patch was temporarily removed from the awful glass eye, and I immediately screwed up both my own eyes to avoid it.

"Tish!" cried Mr. Buck, impatiently, "we must try again!" And he disappeared into the coal-cellar once more.

Mrs. Dove and Miss Prior both immediately began to give me instructions how to behave. The first said, "There is nothing to be afraid of, dear Miss Lydia; do keep your eyes open the next time!" "And," added Miss Prior, "do not look so severe. Say 'plum!' It composes the features into such an amiable expression—'plum!'"

So I said 'plum,' and felt that I looked idiotic; and everybody else said plum, to show me its dulcifying effect on the countenance. Mr. Buck reappeared; and, this time, with a strong effort I did keep my eyes steady, and was profoundly astonished that nothing alarming or unpleasant occurred. The artist rushed into the cellar again, and Miss Prior explained, that he had gone thither to develop me. Dear me, I was never developed before! My pulse quickened. I believe everybody is anxious to see how they look in their portrait, and I quite held my breath when Mr. Buck came out of his retirement and exhibited mine.

"O! you are quite flattered; but it is an admirable likeness! O admirable!" cried Miss Prior.

"It is very good; the dress has taken so well," added Mrs. Dove. My dress was a black and red silk plaid: I like a striking pattern and full colour.

"It is indeed a faithful miniature of my face: it gives even the slight obliquity of my nasal feature, the bumpiness of my forehead, and the steady fulness of my dark grey eye; but I do not agree with Miss Prior in considering it too favourable. No: photography is not a flatterer."

Jenny Polly, seeing that I had come out of the ordeal uninjured, now consented to be put into position on the chair; but no amount of persuasion could induce her to sit still when there, and, after five failures, she was permitted to stand down, and her mamma undertook to show her how easy it was to sit still and be good; but, at the critical moment, turning her head to say, "You see, Jenny Polly, how quiet I can be," the result was that she was represented with two faces.

"Nothing remarkable in that!" whispered

Miss Prior, who never lost the opportunity of saying an ill-natured thing, whether true or false.

The three children were next arranged in a group, and the issue was general confusion; we exhausted ourselves with devices to fix their attention, but all in vain.

I pitied Mr. Buck. He was a little old man, with a wild shock of black hair, beard, and moustache, and a pair of irascible blue eyes. He wore a blouse of dark cloth belted round his person with a broad band of patent leather, and evidently considered himself very picturesque. He was hot and moist, and his hands were spotted and stained with the chemicals, and his face likewise. Altogether, he looked as if he would have been much the better for a plunge into the water-butt,—which occupied a large angle of the little garden — both as to cleanliness and coolness. I was growing tired, and anxious to be away, for the bees, aggravated by our noisy invasion of their territory, showed stinging propensities and buzzed quite savagely. Deeply disappointed, Mrs. Dove proposed to pay and go, when Miss Prior said she should like to be done herself for half-a-crown; and Mr. Buck immediately focussed her. She seemed much agitated, and expressed astonishment at the firmness with which I had sustained myself through the trying operation; but kept herself, nevertheless, as still as a statue.

"We shall do," said Mr. Buck triumphantly, as he issued from the coal-cellar after the developing process; and indeed the portrait he exhibited was a perfect success.

"But it is not a pretty likeness," said Miss Prior, plaintively—"not at all a pretty likeness. Will you try again?"

Mr. Buck protruded his nether lip slightly, and said, if she desired it, he would; but that it was not likely he should obtain a better. "It is yourself, ma'am—your very self!" he observed.

When I mention that Miss Prior has a high colour, chiefly concentrated in her thin, peaked nose, and a drooping eyelid, it will be seen at once how great were the difficulties in the artist's way: she varied her position the next time, so as to hide the latter defect, but was still dissatisfied. I know Mr. Buck said something worse than "Tish!" as he plunged into the coal-cellar once more; for his voice was quite rasped when he came out and desired her to fall into position again. It will scarcely be credited that this foolish woman caused Mr. Buck to do her eight several times in eight different attitudes; indeed she did not desist until there was nothing left to take but a back view, and then she paid her half-crown with a grudge. I was astonished at her meanness; and to see her hesitation over those eight portraits, as to which she should have finished and framed, was ludicrous. After taking and rejecting everybody's advice, she ended by keeping the first, which was certainly the best.

"After all, Miss Lydia, I would rather have mine than yours," she said to me as we were talking the matter over in the bun-shop; "you know it was portraits, not pictures, we went for, and it is easy to buy a fancy engraving. I am glad mine is a true likeness; I never consider people *really respect us* when they *flatter* either in words or *deeds;* and Mr. Buck has flattered you out of recognition."

I was silent. Miss Prior was evidently mortified, by the way she emphasised her remarks, and it was of no use to aggravate her further; but Miss Wolsey, for the sake of the artist's credit, perhaps, took upon herself the reply:

"Flattery, Miss Prior? there cannot be such a thing in photography: Mr. Buck explained to me the whole process. People complain sometimes that it makes them uglier, but I never heard of anybody being made prettier."

"Just come and look, then—if you can tell Lydia Cleverboots's likeness you have better eyes than I can pretend to have!" retorted Miss Prior; and she led the way back to the garden; all of us following in a body. When Mr. Buck saw us, he put his hands up to his head, and grasped his hair frantically; but was pacified when Miss Wolsey explained why we had returned, and he brought the portraits forth. Miss Prior took mine sharply out of his hand, and began to hold forth on its demerits; when suddenly a bee settled on her wrist and stung her severely. She gave out a shrill cry, and dropped my pretty little effigy upon the gravel, where it was utterly obliterated and destroyed. Mr. Buck ejaculated his little word again, retired into the coal-cellar abruptly, and did not come forth while we stayed. Miss Prior feigned deep regret, but I am sure she went away in a better and more contented frame of mind than she would have done but for the happy accident.

"I will tell you where the fault lay, dear," she said, as we parted at Saint Mary's corner; "it made you look too young. You seemed like a handsome person of forty, or thereabouts; and you know you are more than that; for I recollect you quite a young woman when I was a little chit at Miss Thoroton's school. Don't you recollect asking me to dinner once, when I came in a white frock and blue sash, and we had lamb and asparagus, and gooseberry-tart with cream after?" I did remember that time: it was when Mr. Fenton was curate of Saint Mary's. He dined at our house the same day, and little Judith Prior clung close to my elbow all the evening, and listened to every word that we said.

This morning I perceived that one of the military gentlemen's portraits had given place to Miss Prior's; and there she hangs

at this minute, in full view of the market people. I went as usual for my luncheon-bun, after doing my weekly purchases in country produce; and, while eating it by the counter, I heard the butcher's boy (Mr. Steele's, not Mr. Edgebone's boy) call out to one of his acquaintance, "My eye, Tom! if here isn't old Miss Prior. What a stunning guy she looks! don't she!" And I fear Miss Prior heard also; for she entered a moment after, excessively red, and immediately went into a tirade upon the lowness, the coarseness, and the stupidity of the common people.

LIFE AND THE BIRD.

(SEE BEDE'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.)

EDWIN, the Saxon King Northumbrian,
Sitting one day and musing in his hall—
Musing upon the marvellous soul of man—

Said to a priest, "Behold! I am the thrall
Of my own ignorance. What is Life?" The priest
Look'd up, as one who hears a sudden call

Over dim fields at twilight, when the East
Deadens. "O, King! the more we ask and search,
Ever the more the wonder is increased.

The truth thereof neither in school nor church
Have I discover'd. That celestial light
Is darken'd by our earthly smoke and smirch.

Sometimes, O, King, when here you sit at night,
Feasting, and laughing in the merry shine
Of the red fire, and of the torches bright,

That quiver in the purple of your wine,—
A little bird, out of the windy cold,
Out of the darkness, awful and divine,

Comes fluttering through the door, and, waxing bold,
Flies round the walls, and on the loop'd-up shields
Flings his quaint shadow, rapid and manifold.

Whence he has come—except from lonely fields,
And empty night, and sighing wind—none knows:
But he is here, and summer radiance yields

A brief delight, from which he quickly goes,
As Life departs from us. A little stay
He makes, and dances for great joy, and grows

Enamour'd of his home, and does embay
Himself in odorous heat, and claps his wings,
Joying to hear the eloquent minstrels play

Their hymns to Love and everlasting things.
Without, the night is dark, the night is wide,
The night is cold and loud with tempestings,—

A vast, black hollowness, where, undescried,
The shapes of earth lie buried, a huge Naught,
As it seems, but falsely, since for ever abide

Strong facts which by the Morning will be brought
Up from their graves beneath the oblivions dark,
As they first issued from their Maker's Thought.

This stranger from afar, this bird, this spark
Leaping from gloom, and shortly seen no more,
Makes here brief dwelling, as in grove or park,

Then passes forth out at the farther door,—
Out whence he came, out in the fathomless Night,
Out in the long wind, moaning to the shore.

And we shall never know whereto his flight
Conducts him; only that he once was here,
Almost as briefly as those blooms of light

That bud within the Western hemisphere,
The crimson gardens of the downward sun,
Whose Autumn in a moment breathes them sere.

So with our Life. It comes (sent forth by One),
A white and winged bird from sacred gloom
Of ante-natal mysteries, close and dun,

And issues through the gateways of the womb,
And flutters, restless, round the sweet, warm earth;
Then, through that other gate which is the tomb,

Wanes in dusk regions, seeking for new birth:
But whence it came, or where it goes, no eye
Has noted: and our knowledge starves with dearth.

Only we feel it goes not forth to die.
From dark to dark, from haunted dream to dream,
From world to world, this bird-like soul will fly,

For ever, down the ever-flowing stream,
Gaining from swarthy death white infancy,
Somewhere—but where?—within the eternal scheme."

THE OPAL RING.

AN old street, which we shall name the Rue des Truands, in old Paris, in times not old to us. To call it a street is little more than a form of speech; it is rather a narrow, black, squalid passage that divides the tortuous rows of high, dark, rickety, bulgy, sickly houses, irregularly pierced with windows that breathe an atmosphere the nature of which may well account for the unwholesomeness of their complexions. The place has evidently a guilty consciousness of its vileness, but not the least intention to repent and reform; for it crouches there in its filthy obscurity, shrinking from the light of heaven and spurning the sunshine, well knowing what his least ray would bring forth of shame and loathesomeness and ignoble squalor. There is no flag-way, and the pavement's rough irregularities are nearly concealed by the smooth, liquid, black mud that not winter nor summer ever dries there—that has spattered the houses for so many, many years that their fronts, for six or seven feet high, are cased with it—that when thunder-showers come, streams, yet more diluted, in murky torrents into their low doorways.

It is always cold there, and the atmosphere is always charged with a deadly damp and nausea. On the ground-floors of the houses are some shops that have no aspect of containing anything saleable, or of being the scenes where commerce of any kind is carried on; for you always seem to see the same faded, untempting goods, of whatever nature

or description they be, in the dark, mud-splashed windows. Lean, green, undersized children, some looking precociously and viciously intelligent, others stolid in their grimy misery, hang about the doorways or listlessly dabble in the mire; and towards evening, which falls early there, the rats come out and forage, little disturbed by their vicinity. The street is very quiet in general, except on fête days, about some of the low cabarets, from whence there then proceed fierce oaths and savage roars, which are supposed to be songs of mirth and jollity; for even joy there wears a mask of vice and debasement and ferocity.

Narrow, creaking staircases, that never saw a gleam of daylight, lead upward to filthy, dingy rooms; some, lined with the wooden panelling put up at the period of their building, and now so smoke-dried and dirt-stained as to bear no trace of its former aspect or colour; others hung, with shabby paper, no less undistinguishable. All have innumerable closets in the walls, suggestive of concealment and mystery, and not a few secret staircases and strange, unexplained recesses behind chimneys and in the thickness of the walls. Here and there, an attempt has been made, long ago—probably by some new-comer to this God-forgotten place—to rear a pot of mignonette or wall-flower, or those parasites of the poor, scarlet-runner and the nasturtium, on the sill of the dim windows; but the poor things yellowed and sickened and dropped their leaves, and nothing remained but a brown, dry stem, or a few stiff, dead tendrils, clinging round the stick or stretched twine placed to support them.

On a summer evening, when the right side of Paris had not yet lost the last beams of the sun that never fell upon the wrong, a woman turned from the gay quarter into the Rue des Truands. She was dressed in dark garments and closely veiled, so that nothing but her height was clearly distinguishable; and she walked rapidly, and with the anxious air of one who is nervously conscious of being in a false position. She stopped at last before a closed door, examined the aspect of the house, consulted a little paper she held in her hand, and then knocked softly. The door opened instantly, and closed on her as she entered, leaving her in total darkness.

"Fear nothing, madame," said the shrill voice of the invisible porter; "give me your hand, and I will guide you safely."

The visitor held out her hand in the dark, and felt it taken by a hand so cold, so lean, so extraordinarily small, that she could hardly forbear shuddering at the strange, unnatural contact. Through a room or passage, dank and earthy-smelling as a tomb, up a steep, winding staircase, through a long, creaking corridor, still in darkness, now and then faintly and momentarily broken by some invisible borrowed light, the guide and the guest proceeded together in silence, till at the end of the passage they stopped, and the former knocked at the door. Being bidden to enter, they did so; and, for the first time, the visitor, looking down, to about the level of her own waist, saw her conductor, a dwarf hump-back of the female sex, but of an age perfectly undistinguishable, who after peering upward with a quick, strange, side-long glance that seemed to pierce her veil, noiselessly withdrew and left her standing before the room's inhabitant.

He was an old man, of a pale leaden complexion, with quick, keen grey eyes, that peered from beneath low, shaggy black brows, while his hair and long thick beard were white. He sat at a table, covered with venerable-looking books, yellow vellum manuscripts, and various instruments of singular aspect, on which a shaded lamp threw a partial gleam. Signing to the lady with a lean, long hand to advance to a seat near him, he watched her movements with a look of close and quiet scrutiny and in profound silence, till she had taken the chair.

"Excuse me, madame," he said, "but you must raise your veil. I cannot speak to you without seeing your face."

She hesitated for a second, then suddenly flung it up, and boldly and steadily met his eye. The action and the face accorded: both were proud, passionate, resolute—even defiant; the latter, though not in its first youth, handsome. Nothing of all this was lost on the old man; neither did he fail to perceive that the hand that threw back the veil was small and white, and that a jewel flashed from it in the lamplight.

"I come," the visitor said, "for a turn of your art."

He bowed, without removing his eyes from her face. His silent scrutiny seemed to irritate and annoy her.

"Can you, and are you disposed, to aid me? Fear nothing as to the extent and security of your reward;" and she laid a heavy purse on the table.

He appeared not to notice the movement as he said quietly:

"When you have stated the case to me, madame, I shall be better able to answer your question."

It was evident that there was a powerful struggle in the mind of the visitor; for her colour rose, her nostril dilated, and when, after, a pause, she spoke again, her voice was thicker and her words abrupt and hurried.

"I love, and would be loved again, which I am not. I would purchase love—that one man's love—at any price."

"At any price to him, or to you?"

"To either, or to both."

"Is he heart-free—or does he love another?"

"He loves another—his affianced wife."

"Hum! Complicated."

"You have nothing more encouraging than that to say to me?"

The old man smiled a quiet, slightly contemptuous smile.

"Patience, belle dame; this is not an affair of yes or no in the first five minutes. I must consider it."

She was obviously annoyed.

"How long a time do you require for consideration?"

"I require until the day after to-morrow, at this same hour."

"And you will tell me nothing till then? You do not know what it is to me to come to this place. If you doubt my possessing the means to reward your services, here is only a small portion of what I have both the power and the will to bestow, in the event of your aiding me effectually;" and she held the purse out to him. He waved it back quietly.

"Keep your money for the present. You have on your hand a jewel, which, if you choose to confide it to me, shall, in the event of my deciding to accept this task, be made the instrument of accomplishing your wishes, and shall, in any case, be restored to you in safety."

His eye was fixed on a ring she wore—a serpent studded with diamonds and bearing on the head an opal of singular fire and splendour.

"This ring? It belonged to my mother and grandmother, and I promised never to let it out of my possession. There is a family superstition attached to it."

"As you will, madame. I have no wish to undertake the affair, and can only consent to do so on my own conditions."

With fiery impatience she tore rather than drew the ring from her finger, and held it out to him. The opal and the emerald eyes of the serpent shot forth prismatic gleams, and the folds seemed to undulate as he turned it about in the light of the lamp.

"No common jewel this," he said, contemplating it; "the opal is a stone of peculiar influence in the occult sciences, and I can see that this opal is more than usually gifted with such virtues. You did well to bring it; it may aid the accomplishment of your desires more than anything else."

"Then you promise me——"

"Nothing. Understand fully that to-day I in no way bind myself to anything in the affair. The day after to-morrow you shall have my final decision."

He rose. The lady following his example, he rang a hand-bell, and the dwarf again made her appearance to lead her through the intricacies of the house. When she got into the street it was almost dark, and as yet the few lanterns that at distant intervals were suspended across the alley by lines stretched from house to house, were not lighted. With uncertain steps, therefore, she made her way over the slippery filthy pavement, not unfrequently disturbing a huge rat that was ferreting among the garbage flung from the doors, for some nauseous morsel, the refuse of some wretched meal.

More than once she was nervously conscious of attracting the suspicious attention of a denizen of this iniquitous haunt; despite her resolute nature, her heart beat high at the sensation of encountering a very real danger; and when she emerged on the broad open thoroughfares, still only in the light, a load of alarm and anxiety was removed from her breast. As she turned a corner she suddenly came on a group of three persons, an old and young man, with a girl of about seventeen. She recoiled at the sight, as if something had stung her, and the young man, fancying she was startled at finding herself in such immediate contact with them, drew back with a "Pardon, madame!" standing out of the way, hat in hand, to let her pass. She rushed past him, and her dark veiled figure was soon lost in the dim light.

Meanwhile the little party strolled on, talking cheerily by the way. That Gaston de Montrouge and Geneviève Rouvières were lovers, was a most unmistakable fact. They were, moreover, affianced. The elderly man on whom the girl leaned, was her father, He belonged to a family of the bourgeoise. and had made a considerable fortune in commerce, from which he had not retired. His sister had married the Chevalier de Montrouge, and, by virtue of a family compact, it was agreed that her only son should gild the somewhat threadbare nobility of his father's race with the louis d'or of his uncle's only daughter, when both should arrive at years of discretion. At an early age, Gaston, through the influence of his paternal relations, entered one of the most brilliant regiments of the guard. Soon after, his parents died, and from thence his uncle's house became his established home, when away from his duties,—an arrangement which the worthy man in nowise objected to, as bringing the young people together, and tending to cement the contract already entered into between the senior members of the family, by engaging the inclinations of the parties more especially concerned.

The result was eminently successful. Gaston found his pretty, gentle cousin, with her nut-brown hair and hazel eyes entirely to his taste, and Geneviève thought—and not, perhaps, without reason—that the beau cousin was by far the most accomplished cavalier she had ever encountered. Unfortunately, though, other and more experienced judges were of little Geneviève's opinion.

At a grand gathering of the great folks of the Faubourg St. Germain, the Marquise de Vaucrasson, a lofty lady who had just cast off the weeds she had put on and put off with nearly equal satisfaction, particularly distinguished the handsome young garde, and took every means, short of declaring the fact,

to make him aware of the favourable impression he had produced. Gaston was, however, sincerely and seriously attached to his cousin, and he had, moreover, passed the age when youths are given to fall in love with women some ten years their senior. He therefore showed himself less sensible of the great dame's condescension than might have been expected; and when on various subsequent occasions she renewed her advances, they were met with a coolness that drove at once her love and her pride to the point of some desperate resolve, which the discovery of the position he and Geneviève held with regard to each other, put the finishing stroke to.

Hence her visit to the sage of the Rue des Truands, a man celebrated for his skill in the compounding of such devilish contrivances as suited the taste and spirit of the age, ever more ready to appeal for aid to the angels of darkness than to those of light, and having far stronger faith in the power of Satan and his myrmidons than in that of the Blessed Virgin and all the legion of saints.

On the day appointed, Madame de Vaucrasson, who had passed some hours of not very enviable anxiety, torn alternately between hope, fear, jealousy, and anticipated triumph, started once more for the dwelling of the man of magic. As before, the door opened noiselessly at her knock, and the dwarf's cold little hand took her fevered one, to lead her through the dreary labyrinth.

These details had, however, passed without her notice. Would the sage accord her desire? Might she hope through him to win Gaston? That was all her thought; and, on entering the room, her emotion was so strong that she could hardly command her voice to ask the question.

The answer filled her with a thrill of wild, fierce joy.

"I have studied the matter closely," the old man said, "and, notwithstanding all the difficulties and dangers—for there are dangers, and to me especially, in the work—I have decided on accepting your commission. Success I can promise you; but my reward must be in proportion to the labour and the risk."

"Name your terms."

He mentioned a sum that would have startled an applicant less bent on the attainment of her desires; but the marquise, without a moment's hesitation, acceded to the demand.

"And the ring?" she asked.

"The ring, as I told you, shall be made the instrument of accomplishing your object. Return here this day week with an order for the sum we have agreed upon; and the ring, charged with the power to perform the mission, is yours."

She clasped her hands, with a gleam of triumph in her flashing black eyes.

The evening of the seventh day found her once more on her way to the magician's. The old man took from a little box the ring, and handed it to her. Never had it looked so magnificent. A thousand gorgeous tints played through the opal, every diamond flashed and sparkled with increased lustre, while the emerald eyes of the serpent gleamed with a living light, almost terrible to look at. Madame de Vaucrasson turned it about, and contemplated it lovingly.

"Whatever man wears, or even has about his person, that ring," the sage said, "must, so long as it remains in his possession, love you passionately, no matter what may have been his previous sentiments, or what the obstacles that lie between you. Beware, therefore, into whose hands it falls."

She gave him the order for the sum they had agreed upon, and prepared to depart.

"I expect, madame, that you will come and give me an account of your success. I shall require this."

The tone was so quietly authoritative, that she felt herself compelled to make the desired promise; and, concealing the jewel in her bosom, she hastened home with all speed.

How to convey it to Gaston? That was the next step. She thought of various expedients, but none wholly satisfied her. She resolved, at all events, never to separate herself from it, so that whatever occasion chance might offer, supposing she did not immediately hit upon a deliberate plan of action, she might profit by.

That night there was a fête at the hôtel of the Duchesse de Maubreuil, the house where she had first met Gaston. Would he be there? Probably; his family was connected with that of the Duc, and she knew he was always a welcome guest.

Her toilette that evening was performed with a care greater than she was wont to bestow on it. She wished to keep up some illusion even in her own eyes; she wished, when the ring did its work—the work she knew it was, by no power of hers, charged to perform—to feel or to fancy that her woman's charms had some share in the effect; She looked in her glass with pride and triumph. Hope and security had lent a new lustre to her beauty. The diamonds that blazed in her luxuriant dark hair were not more brilliant than her eyes; and her cheek wore a bloom that needed no aid from art. Most men who saw her that night might have thought the aid of the ring superfluous.

As she entered the apartments of the Hôtel Maubreuil, there was a general stir and murmur. Gaston was there. He heard it; looked where he saw other eyes directed; and, for the first time, was struck by the beauty and majesty of the woman whose unconcealed preference he had so coldly and constantly discouraged. His eye followed her through the crowd; he saw how it bent in homage before her; he saw with what dignified indifference she received it—how valueless in

her sight was the adoration of those who sought but a word or a smile to treasure and be proud of. And this woman had humbled herself to him—had waited but for him to be gracious. The demon of vanity had begun to work in his breast, ere ever the ring approached his finger.

Between the dances, he went up and spoke to her. Her manner was far less earnest and encouraging than usual; if not cold, it was at least marked with a calm dignity, very different to her usual tone with him. This piqued him, and he longed for an occasion when he might converse with her more at ease than he could do there, standing before her seat, and surrounded by the other guests. She complained of the heat, and he hastened to offer to conduct her to one of the less crowded and cooler apartments: a proposal she quietly accepted.

Passing through several rooms, they reached the last of the suite, which was becoming nearly deserted by the recommencement of the dancing, and, leading her to a sofa, Gaston took a place by her side.

The conversation was resumed, by her, in the same calm, ordinary tone; by him, with a certain earnestness, which she seemed at first rather to put aside; but by degrees, as she saw his interest evidently increasing, she suffered her manner to relax, and her apparent indifference to give way to a softer aspect.

"I am told, Monsieur de Montrouge," she said at last, "that you are going to be married to your cousin. Forgive me if I commit an indiscretion in speaking thus on the subject; but I trust you will believe how sincere is the interest I feel in aught that so deeply concerns your happiness."

Gaston had coloured violently at the commencement of her speech. Geneviève! this was the way he was keeping inviolate his love and faith to her! But, for this emotion his wily interlocutor was fully prepared, and she put into the conclusion of her sentence an accent that soon reassured him. She knew now that he loved another; she had regulated her own feelings, or at least, the expression of them, accordingly; and he might look upon her now as a friend. She was a noble woman, after all!

"You will not be offended," she said, in the same kindly, smiling manner, "if I ask you to accept a slight token of the friendship I feel for you. Many of your other friends will offer you marriage-gifts. You will not, I trust, deny me a similar privilege."

As she spoke, she drew the ring from her finger, and between her words, glided it on his. She knew that, once there, she need not fear his removing it.

He took the hand that performed the act, and covered it with passionate kisses.

Poor little Geneviève's sweet face bears a far different aspect to the sunny one it presented that happy evening when, with Gaston by her side, she and her father strolled out together.

Now she rarely sees him, and though his manner is always kind, it is ever constrained and uneasy. Sometimes he betrays a restless impatience; sometimes a sort of pitying regard; and he seems at all times ill at ease and dissatisfied, but more with himself than with others.

At first she used to question him tenderly; but now she has learned that this, so far from leading to a solution of the mystery, only adds to the uneasy symptoms.

At times she is jealous, offended, angry; but then her father blames him, and her woman's nature rises up to defend and justify him. But, let her mood be what it will, she is ever anxious, fearful, and unhappy.

All this Madame de Vaucrasson learns; and her cruel nature takes a savage delight in the sufferings of the unoffending girl.

Meanwhile, Gaston's stormy love for the relentless woman secures daily a deeper hold on him: changing his whole nature, making him who was gentle, cheerful, and loving, impatient, irritable, jealous, at times almost brutal. Occasionally, this fierce passion almost takes the aspect of hate: he treats her with tyranny and scorn; he has a thousand caprices; a thousand exigencies, and fierce disputes, embittering all their intercourse, rise between them.

At last, the Marquise remembers the promise the magician extracted from her, that last day when they parted. She had never performed it. Perhaps to this act of disobedience on her part may, in some degree, be attributable the unhappiness the realisation of her desires has brought her. She will lose no time in attempting to avert his displeasure; and not later than to-morrow, she will go to the Rue des Truands, and lay her difficulties before him.

That night Gaston came to spend the evening with her. He seemed in better humour than usual; and she fancied that the magical power of the old man might have made him acquainted with her resolve, and that this had already produced a certain amelioration in the position. Her determination was, therefore, more than ever fixed that the morrow should not pass without bringing the execution of her design.

The evening passed quietly. Gaston was more like his former self than she had seen him since the commencement of their attachment; and she rejoiced in the idea that had presented itself to her. At last the hour for his departure approached.

"How long it is," he said, "since we have had a day altogether to ourselves! Let us go to-morrow into the country, and spend it there."

"Not to-morrow, Gaston. I have engagements in town: but the day after,—any other day."

"I will not have another day! Engagements! When I command, what other engagements stand!"

"Command! This to me? You forget yourself strangely, monsieur."

Long and loud was the dispute; fierce and cruel were the insults bandied between them; and with far more of hate and vengeance, than of love in their hearts, they parted.

At sunset, the Marquise de Vaucrasson, disguised as of old, stole forth from the wicket by which the garden of her hotel opened on a quiet street, and after looking cautiously round, turned her steps in the direction of the Rue des Truands.

Hardly had she turned the first corner, when the little door she had locked behind her, opened again, and a man with a cloak and a slouched hat and drooping feather, stepped forth, and proceeded in the direction she had taken, following her without ever approaching her closely, until she arrived at the entrance of the Rue des Truands.

Here, the darkness rendering the risk of losing sight of her greater, he ventured somewhat to diminish the distance that separated them, and kept her in view until the door at which she knocked opened and closed upon her.

Just opposite to the house was a low, dark archway, leading no one could, from the street and at this hour, distinguish whither. Beneath its shade Gaston placed himself, and remained in observation, quite unconscious that while all his attention was riveted on the opposite side of the street, he was himself the object of a no less rigid surveillance on the part of two men of peculiarly evil aspect behind him.

Suddenly, he was made acquainted with the fact by being seized from the back, pinioned, gagged, and carried off; it was quite impossible to say whither, for his cloak was wrapped round his head, so as to exclude every other object from his sight.

After some minutes, he found himself placed on his feet, and his head released from its covering, though his arms still remained bound. Looking round, he found himself in a low den, surrounded by three or four men whose appearance was in no way calculated to reassure him, and who, with coarse jokes and laughter, mocked at his incautiousness, while they proceeded to strip him of whatever objects of worth he had about him.

Suddenly, a thought flashed across him. The ring! He remembered not that the man who had tied his hands had silently drawn it off in the operation. Yet, strange to say, not a tinge of regret accompanied the recollection. His love for the donor—whither, too, had it fled! Marvellous! The memory of it was but like a fevered, hateful dream, from which he had but that moment awakened. Love her! He must have had a fit of madness. Forsake Geneviève for such a woman! Was he still in his senses, or was not the whole thing a troubled vision? No, the present, at least was painfully real; and it would be time enough when he should have escaped from his actual position, to try to explain to himself the feelings and events that had preceded it.

At last the men found that there remained little else worth taking, and they announced to their captive that they were bons enfans, who had no wish to do him any hurt, and that as he had not troubled them with any foolish and useless resistance, his liberty should be restored to him; adding, however, that he must submit to being conducted thence in such manner as they considered it desirable to adopt.

Knowing the hopelessness of disputing the point, Gaston assented to their arrangements; and his head being again enveloped, he felt a strong hand laid on his shoulder, and himself, with various brief warnings and directions, led through a variety of tortuous ways, now mounting, now descending, now turning to the right, now to the left, until a certain change of atmosphere, and altered sound in his own footsteps and in those of his conductors, warned him that he had got into the open air. After walking a little further, they stopped; suddenly, he felt the cord that bound his hands loosened; but before he could, with his utmost speed, release his head from the folds of his cloak, he found himself standing in the street under the quiet starlight, alone.

He looked around, bewildered. The street he was in was one a considerable distance from the Rue des Truands; the affair seemed to become more dream-like than ever; but one thing was clear: he was free, and his way lay unobstructed before him.

How long a time had elapsed during the progress of these strange events, the absence of his watch prevented his being able to tell. He guessed, however, that it could not be too late to find his uncle and Geneviève still stirring — Geneviève, towards whom his whole heart yearned as if years of pain and cruel absence had kept him from her.

With a rapid step he proceeded to the well-known door. Suddenly, when about to ring, he remembered the signal which of old used to announce to her his coming; and, passing on, he softly tapped at the window where she was wont to sit of an evening at her embroidery.

How long it was since she had heard that sound! She was watching there now, but not for him; her father was out, and she sat alone, waiting his return. Formerly she used to fly to open the door herself when that signal sounded; now, with a voice she struggled hard to modulate, she bade the old servant, Catherine, do so, while she continued to work, but with stitches all of which must come out to-morrow. Gaston entering, stopped at the door, contemplating her in silence.

"Bon soir, mon cousin."

She always marked the relationship now when she addressed him.

"Geneviève!"

What was there in his voice that made her turn her averted look upward? Something strangely eloquent in that and in his face there must have been, for in another instant his brown-eyed bird was in the arms he had opened to receive her.

Meanwhile the interview of the Marquise de Vaucrasson with the man of magic was come to an end, and once more she steps out into the dark and squalid street. Ere she has proceeded far, she is conscious of a step behind her; she quickens her pace, the step becomes more rapid, still faster and faster she goes, still faster and faster the step follows. She is about to run when a hand is placed on her shoulder, and a hot breath penetrates her veil.

"Do not shriek!" a hoarse voice says, "it is useless; I mean you no harm, only come with me quietly," and the other hand grasps her.

She does shriek and struggle, but not long, for a thick muffler is placed over her mouth, and she becomes unconscious.

When the marquise woke from her trance, she found herself lying on a miserable and filthy mattrass, in a room which better merited the appellation of a cellar. By the dim, flickering light of a wretched lamp, whose fumes added a fresh ingredient to the combination of loathsome odours which filled the den, she gradually distinguished the objects that surrounded her, each and all partaking of the same mean and disgusting aspect.

She was alone, that was something, and, starting up, she looked round; when there—close by the head of the pallet—sat a man watching her. She shrieked, and hid her face in her hands.

"Do not fear me," said the voice that had sounded in her ears just before she became insensible; "I would not harm you, ma belle, I adore you!" and he tried to withdraw the hands that covered her eyes.

"Monster! I hate you—do not approach me—away!"

"Gently; I tell you I love you—love you passionately—but remember, you are in my power; do not provoke me, for I am not patient. And what does not yield, I break."

Her utter, utter helplessness came across her stronger than any other feeling, and she wept aloud, in passionate despair.

"Let me go, for Heaven's sake! for mercy's sake let me go! What can you gain by keeping me here? Only release me, and I swear to make you rich for life."

"I may not be so poor as I seem; it is for your own sake I choose to keep you. Look here! this is not a beggar's possession."

He took from some secret receptacle, and held before her, a ring, which, even in that dim place, gleamed and flashed like a mirror in the sun.

She understood her position now, though not how it came about. Gaston—where was he? Lost to her for ever, wherever he might be. One thing before all others presented itself to her; she must regain possession of the ring, must free herself from the hated thrall of this wretch's affection—anything—anything on earth was better than that.

She knew the only course to be adopted was dissimulation; and, though her soul recoiled from the attempt, she must feign a disposition to be won over to listen to his detested advances.

She would not irritate him, she would gain time, and trust to find an opportunity to attain her object. And thus temporising and watching, the day, whose wan light she was only dimly conscious of for a few hours, passed away, and again night came.

All that time she had, broken in body and spirit, passed crouched on the wretched mattrass. Her gaoler had offered her food, but she had shrunk from it with loathing; and though she felt not the slightest disposition to eat, still the want of sustenance, and the sufferings, mental and physical, of her situation, had worn her down to a degree of painful prostration. Far on in the night she sunk into a troubled doze. A slight stir in the room awoke her; but she affected still to sleep, and with half-open eyes watched with cat-like vigilance.

She saw her captor moving quietly about, but rather as it in consideration for her slumber than as though fearing detection. What had he to fear from her? She saw him, after casting a glance towards where she lay, and listening to her respiration, take from the place where he kept it the fated ring. He hesitated for a moment, as if doubtful where to deposit it, then, with a significant upward toss of the head, that said as plain as toss could say, "While I have her safe, there is no danger for it," he placed it in a little closet in the wall, and taking his hat, left the room, locking the door after him.

With every nerve on the stretch, the marquise listened for some minutes; then, reassured by the silence, she sprung with noiseless rapidity from the pallet, and in a moment was at the cupboard door; she tried it, it yielded to her hand almost without an effort. Again she listened, but the rapid beating of her heart was the only sound that came to her ears. Within the closet was a little box; this she took down and opened; and there, encircled in its own light, lay the jewelled serpent, coiled at the bottom, and glaring upward at her with its malignant emerald eyes. She clutched it; the first step was gained; the next—the next she was spared the necessity of deciding on, by the sudden opening of the door, with an oath. No love

now marked the expression of the hated ruffian face, as he rushed upon her. Shrieking, she crouched, still grasping the ring.

"Give it up, or I crush you!"

"Never!"

One blow of his clenched fist on her temple, and she fell, white and nerveless, at his feet, while the ring dropped from her limp hand. The robber took it up; in an instant his aspect underwent a change; he gazed upon the prostrate form with despairing horror; he seized her in his arms, carried her to the light, bent over her with passionate exclamations of tenderness and self-reproach. She did not shrink from him now—she did not turn her face from his—she lay unresisting in his arms—dead.

AT BRUGES AND OSTEND.

"Tir-ely!"—"G; E, C!"—three notes of the common chord,—a crotchet, a semiquaver, and a dotted quaver in duration, are sounded on the conductor's brazen bugle-horn, and the train bears us away from Ghent in the direction of Bruges, past market-gardens, the taste of whose ambrosial asparagus still lingers in our pensive mouths; over pastures, delightful not merely to the eye alone, but delicious in their ultimate form of pats of butter. We glide smoothly, partly because we dart straight forward, through a country under garden-like culture, the very foot of the hedge which bounds the railway being planted with a line of well-grown sorrel. Neat brick cottages look at us cheerfully, and wish us a pleasant journey; though, for their part, they are perfectly content to remain where they are, in the midst of their tiny parterres of flowers, their little fields of flax, peas, or corn, with grass walks round them, their bowers of walnut and cherry-trees, their thickets of alder and willow copse. Flat and rich the land opens before us, as we penetrate successively to odd-named stations—to Landeghem, Hansbeke, Aeltre, Bloemennael, Oostcamp—and that is all. We have just time to wonder how much cheese must be made, how many beeves fatted, what rivers and mountains of beer and bacon must annually be yielded by the soil we are traversing: when we reach the Bruges station, an open inclosure, exposed to drowning when it rains hard, to blinding and choking with dust when it blows hard, and to frying when the sun smiles down graciously on Belgium. After a cramping on the railway seat, it is better to walk to our hotel—of course the excellent Fleur de Blé—if only for the magnificent landlady's sake, and the enticements of her able chef de cuisine.

The porter by whose side we are walking into Bruges as he leisurely trundles our bandboxes on his wheelbarrow, allows us time to inspect the physiognomy of the place, and to come to a conclusion in our own private mental council-chamber, whether we think we shall like our new acquaintance, or not. For with towns as with persons, we often make up our mind about them at the first glance.

Bruges, I think, by the look of it, will do. Yes; it will do. I like the fat-faced Flemish children in their Sunday clothes, because it is fair-time; and the watchmaker's with his windows full of unexceptionable horological conundrums. I like the print-shops, full of local topography; and the tarts, and the bonbons, and the gingerbread. I like the buxom provincial dames, who exaggerate Parisian fashions, with their enormous crinolines setting out rich silk dresses to the capacity of Monster-Green ballons, capable of taking eight or ten persons in or up. I like the family groups, composed of young and old, sitting round the windows, from which every bit of blind and curtain is removed, to gaze at the gaily-dressed folk who wander up and down. They gaze at me too; and I somehow think their foreman—a grandmamma in an elaborate and blazing cap—pronounces a favourable verdict as I pass, returning curious peep for inquisitive glance, and amused simper for approving smile. I greatly like the novelties of costume. Can anything be handsomer than the ear-rings and brooches of the farmers' wives? bought, doubtless, at the corner-shop, kept by G. De Vos, who inscribes himself not only Goud-smid and Zilver-smid, but Diamant-zetter, to crown the whole. How modest and becoming are the rich dark cloaks with the hood overshadowing, yet not concealing, the face!—a decorous garment for elderly women, a coquettish one for the young and pretty. Certainly, whenever the Parisian milliners are suffering from an exhaustion of their inventive genius—a break-down which ought to surprise nobody, were it to occur—I recommend them to go to Bruges in search of ideas. There is a clear, stiff-starched cap, folded together in front into a peak, and protruding beyond the edge of the hat, which would cause a sensation at Longchamps. Another cap, radiating from the face around the inner circumference of the hat, is absolutely charming. Finally, I like the beggars; because it is certainly not a matter of duty to give alms to such mendicants as these, unless you choose to do so, for the whim of the thing. An amateur-beggar, in a black velvet hood, is succeeded by a fleshy-visaged boy, who tells you that his mother is dead, and his father in some other blissful state, with a grin that betrays his enjoyment of the hoax as much as your own. When tired out with his following you, you take him by the shoulders and turn him right-about-face backwards, on the pivot of his heels; he laughs outright. Why, an hour afterwards I encountered the very same bereaved orphan-boy driving a spruce donkey-milk-cart laden with cans: whether his inheritance or his trust I had no means of learning!

The hands joined in supplication, the

anticipative kiss given to the tips of the fingers, the graceful professional attitude, the dignified thanks, the complacent smile to show approbation of your benevolent conduct, are well worth any trifle you may bestow—they convert it into money fairly earned. The Bruges beggars raise beggary to the dignity of one of the fine arts. They take to begging with the determination to excel, which we admire when Talmas and Macreadys take to acting. Your dole is the reward of merit, rather than the subsidy to want. A female veteran, to whom a single centime was given, as a psychological experiment, was too well-bred to break out into abuse of the niggardly donor, as a commonplace beggar would have done, but took it as quietly as if it had been a double-sou piece. Many and many of the Flemish beggars do not look upon the alms you give them exactly as a gratuitous offering. One good turn, they think, deserves another, and they contrive to do it in their way. They firmly entertain, as an article of faith, the belief that the voice of the poor in behalf of the rich has special influence. In a Flemish cathedral, a woman once begged me to give her something, not for herself, she said, but for another poor woman, who had just been confined, and who had not bread to eat; she would pray the Bon Dieu for me. I gave her four sous which, she received thankfully, and immediately set about performing her part of the bargain. The two-pennyworth of prayers were commenced and concluded in my presence, that I might see she had not cheated me; and I left the church by so much richer and lighter than I had entered it. I like, too, independent of economic reasons, the trifling and even infinitesimal alms habitually given by many—themselves indigent—to beggars, such as even a single raw potato. Half-a-dozen potatoes so obtained would prevent death from actual starvation.

It is Sunday morning, bright and warm. The streets are busy and bustling; the front parlours are gay with clean curtains, fresh flowers, and pot-plants, some of which, of trailing habit, are grown suspended in large sea-shells. The maid-servants look out of window with inquisitive and shining faces. The large irregular square, Grande Place, is hung all round with thick-clustered flags of the Belgian tricolor, with its somewhat sombre and ominous combination of black, yellow, and red, so different to the gaiety expressed by the bright French tricolor—blue, white, and red. The draped and crowned statuettes of the Virgin and Child behind the lamps at the corners of the streets, look all the fresher in their faded finery for having had the glass before them polished clean. Smartly-dressed people are taking their places at balconies and windows, which latter are illuminated with lighted candles, whose insignificance is made apparent by the brilliant sunshine outside. The members of the Café Société, or Club, have mustered strong under the awning in front of their billiard-room. On one side of the square rises the belfry—a marvel of brick and stone masonry, as are several other towers in Bruges—and from its airy summit, the famous chimes send forth an almost continual shower of notes, filling the atmosphere with the music of bells. Are there any chimes in Europe superior to those of Bruges? Compared with them, the carillon of Dunkerque is no more than a tinkling cymbal, a thin-voiced harpsichord. Round a corner, comes a little girl clad in white muslin from top to toe, with a flowing veil and a wreath of flowers. She is accompanied by, I suppose, her brother: a pretty boy with well-curled flaxen hair, in a skin-tight pink silk dress, with a sheep-skin picturesquely wrapped about his chest and loins. He is the representative of St. John the Baptist. They are followed by a servant bearing in his arms a lamb, decked out with bright pink ribbons. They are going to their rendezvous at the cathedral. For, to-day is the fête of St. Sacrament, and they are to take part in the solemn show.

At various conspicuous points about the town, temporary altars, reposoirs, or reposing-places (for the host) have been erected and adorned with scenic columns, angels, pictures, flowers, candlesticks, steps, carpets, and green branches. Near one of these, close to a convenient corner, we will stop to see the procession pass, especially as an obliging shop-keeper offers a chair for mademoiselle to stand on, and raise herself above the shoulders and heads of the crowd. The Theatre of the Passion, in the fair close by, under the direction of Messrs. John Klepsken, professors of jimnastic (sic), have ceased their performances, to resume them as soon as the pious band of town-pilgrims have defiled out of sight into the opposite street. The great bell also, in the Babelian belfry, which requires the united strength of ten able-bodied men to make it utter a sound, is booming away with all its might, bellowing forth a deep metallic roar which, you can feel, communicates its vibration to something within you, while the chimes scatter forth their fragments of tune with an irregularity which gives something of the wildness of an orgie to this out-door religious ceremony. But, hush! Here are the handsome cuirassiers on coal-black steeds; and here comes the band of mounted musicians on milk-white ditto, to mark the contrast between harmony and slaughter. There are files of little orphan-children reading their prayer-books and dressed in the costume of three hundred years ago. There are large silver lanterns with lighted tapers on tall poles, stretching out of the stomach-girdles of surpliced beadles. I long for one of those silver lanterns to serve me as a hall-lamp in my heretical home. There are parties of priests

tossing incense in the air, followed by banners of velvet, silk, and jewels; there are crowds of little boys ringing tiny hand-bells in cadence, producing by sound the same effect on the ear as the fluttering of a swarm of gnats has on the eye; there is a double file of monks with shorn polls, sandaled feet, rope girdles, brown cloth vestments, and—I must take the liberty of adding as to these particular monks—shocking bad heads, if there be any truth in phrenology.

Then comes the priest who carries the host under a golden canopy borne by notables. His sacred charge is rested on the altar; the chimes cease, but the great bell keeps going: every toll sounding like the discharge of a cannon. The prescribed prayers are devoutly said; respectable, well-dressed, middle-aged men, drop down on their knees on the hard pavement in the middle of the street. The paternosters duly concluded, the host is again borne beneath the gaudy canopy; the chimes resume their tinkling, and the procession moves on, followed first by the burgomaster and the town authorities in their official costume, and then by great ladies accompanied by their bonnes in black hoods, and then by the mass of the religious population, which constitutes the majority. They are gone; they have disappeared from the bright open Place, down the yawning throat of a shady street.

Are we dreaming? Have we seen a vision? No; for here are the people pulling the altar. to pieces and unfurnishing its finery, as soon as it has served its purpose. The only personage in the multitudinous procession who did not perfectly perform his part was the be-ribboned lamb. It would not go, and had to be pulled along with a string. They were maladroit not to choose a tame cot-lamb for the purpose. What destiny awaits that symbolic lamb? Will it be quartered and sold as vulgar butcher's meat? Shall we eat any of its chops for dinner to-morrow? As likely as not; for it was a show lamb, fat and plump, and we are served with the best of everything. The Fleur de Blé skims the cream of the markets, even before it comes to market.

Patiently awaiting Fleur de Blé's dinner-time, quench we our thirst at the Café Foy with a bottle of delicious beer, the native nectar of Belgium, like that we had last night for the uneven price of twenty-four centimes, or twopence-halfpenny minus the tenth of a penny. What can be the Belgian fancy for constantly giving odd centimes in change? They are not of sufficient value to offer to a waiter nor to put in the poor's-box.

"Some beer, if you please. No? Why?"

"We don't sell beer, Monsieur, till six in the evening; we don't want common people to come in during the day."

"Good, my dear little aristocrat of a waiter. I was a common person, then, yesterday, when I had good beer, with ham and bread-and-butter, by gaslight; but I am an uncommon one this morning, now that I pay you a franc for bad Seltzer water, which you have spoilt in uncorking it. Hein?"

At five in the afternoon anybody who is anybody drives to the Casino, the suburban café-villa-garden of a Philharmonic Society, where a splendid assortment of ladies' and children's toilettes—with the wearers of the dresses inside them, be it understood—sit under the shade of flowering trees around a trellised temple of harmony, listening to Sunday evening music, regardless of the anathemas of Exeter Hall. The most remarkable performance on the present occasion was an eclogue sung by a couple of rival nightingales, accompanied by an excellent band, with such loud, clear, and long-drawn notes, that you might fear they were singing themselves to death. But when the concert was over, they were at it again, to settle the question who was the champion vocalist of the grove. It was of no use awaiting the issue of a struggle that promised to last all night, and longer; so we passed up the endless overarching avenue which embowers the road after its departure from Bruges. The mists were rising fast from the canal, and wearied sight-seers were glad to rest their eyes in sleep behind the dense obscurity of a paper-rolling window-blind, in addition to the ordinary curtain of calico.

"Tir-ely!" From Bruges to Ostend by rail is nothing but a butterfly's flitting over meadow land. In winter you might believe yourself skating over the ditch-ice in a sledge of larger dimensions than usual. At the Ship Hotel you will lodge and live well; but Ostend life is rather peculiar. As a packet port, it is like other packet ports, but duller and with less variety. It is a fortified town of apartments to let, well peppered with sand within and without, and composed of a set of rectangular streets, many of them bordered by stunted lime-trees, whose heads are shorn into the shape of haycocks. The land approach is over drawbridges and solid arched gates, which do not give too much room to pass; and therefore, when going in, take care not to meet on market-days the herds of pannier-laden donkeys thronging out, whose impetuosity to get home to their thistles sweeps every obstacle before them. There is no rural scenery around Ostend; nothing but a sandy flat, without a hillock to vary it, except the range of dunes that rise in defiance of the angry ocean. From the town you cannot get a glimpse of the sea; and yet, during the season, a medley of three thousand strangers, comprising a large admixture of Teutonic and Slavonic elements, over-run the place, sometimes thankful if they can be accommodated with a bed under a dining-table. Out of the season, Ostend would be a capital place whenever you want to learn a language or get through a heavy,

dead-pulling literary task. The one handsome street, the Rue de Quai, and the two respectable squares, the Grande Place and the Grain Market, are then equally dull and dead. There is not the slightest pretext for an inland excursion. On the coast there is nothing to distract your attention on either side, but long lines of sand-hills stretching far away into invisibility. The oyster-park and the lobster-park are the nearest approach to a zoological gardens. The only seaside promenade, faced at low water by hard, firm sands, and commanding an extensive marine horizon, is really a digue or breakwater, built of brick, to prevent the sea from swallowing up the town. The digue, whose surface furnishes an ever clean and dry pavement, with a gentle slope down to the sands, is really a beautiful walk, and is the centre and the sum of the Ostend gaieties. Invalids who cannot budge far for exercise, can still inhale the sea-breeze here; idlers may be amused by the airs and graces of the visitors, and by the ludicrous freedom which people often allow themselves when they are conscious of being away from home.

The requirements of the heterogeneous concourse are impartially attended to; the Etablissement des Bains is an unfailing resource for all. Hungry folk can betake themselves to the restaurant, which occupies one wing; and if you have no other mode of introducing yourself to likely people, you can always ask whether the water is cold to-day. For the foreign dames and demoiselles, glass screens are raised across the digue, to prevent the winds on either side from visiting them too roughly; while the dames and demoiselles themselves are assembled for the benefit of the native mendicants.

If you return to France either viâ the semi-dead, prostrate towns, Nieuport and Furnes, to Dunkerque, or by rail to Lille, beware how you take with you, in the first place, publications offensive to the French authorities, — and abominable libels are printed in Belgium—and secondly, tobacco, cigars, or snuff. A cargo of either will get you into trouble, or cause you vexation. A word might be said about the Flemish pictures in the churches which you ought to see—the Van Eycks, the Memlings, the Probuses, and so on, but their extortionate keepers render the subject painful. Pictures are veiled with green baize curtains, in order to extract twenty-sou pieces from travellers' pockets, under the pretence of preserving the hidden treasure. I blushed with disgust to see, at Bruges, the tombs of Charles the Rash, and Mary of Burgundy, blockaded by a shabby wooden screen, on which was a notice that the guardian had orders not to open the door until he had received from every visitor a ten-sou bit, for the Committee of Repairs, in addition to his private gratuity. The Braves Belges lay a heavy tax on admirers of ecclesiastical art.

There are other things in Belgium that might be changed for the better; for instance certain young ladies' schools have too great a resemblance to prisons, both in material construction and in management. High walls that exclude the sun, inclosed courtyards and thickly-screened gardens, are more likely to affect pupils with the home-disease, than to cheer their spirits or promote their health. What sense is there in the etiquette observed, as at Ghent, that young girls must be concealed? That they must not walk out, even in formal procession, except to mass or confession, through the streets of the city? That, to have a half-holiday at a dismal place called a campagne, almost as isolated as the prison pensionnat itself, they must be driven out of town in close vigilantes,— hackney one-horse coaches, with most moderate fares, —and be treated during their journey to and fro, and during their stay in the country, as if they were an Old Bailey jury out for their Sunday airing in Epping Forest! Put naughty girls into spinning-houses and sequestration, as much as you like, and for as long as you like; but for good girls, the hope and ornament of their homes,—poor pretty little dears!—why incarcerate them in close confinement, at least before they have done something to deserve it? I would not send a child of mine to such a conventual establishment, to have her spirit broken and her health enfeebled. I am answered that it is the custom of the country, long established; that it is part of the peculiar views of the dominant religious party; that such an education accords with the destiny which devotes a large number of females to a monastic or semi-monastic life; and that English people have no right to make observations after rendering themselves the laughing-stock of Europe by straining at the gnat of a Sunday band, while whole caravans of camels are swallowed without a symptom of face-making. But, recrimination is no reply; and before embarking a daughter to be educated abroad, I would first ascertain, among other things, the amount of air, light, exercise, and food to be allowed her. May I recommend this precaution to English parents?

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EGO ET BALBUS.

It was this man and his friend who pervaded Arnold's Exercises and other works of the like nature in my school days, and caused me to hate them from the first; they were always putting themselves in ont-of-the-way circumstances, and demanding to have their position rendered into the finest Latin.

Ego et Balbus were about to take a journey (with diligence) across the hither Alps; were on the point of sailing over to Syracuse in a five-banked galley; were revolving in their minds a banquet of lampreys to the senators at a thousand sestertia a head; were puffed up with what they knew about the freedman of Caius Gracchus' mother-in-law; were the unprofessional augurs (and they bored us a good deal) of everything that was about to happen in the State of Rome; were the peculiar oracles of intelligence of all that had taken place, from the very earliest times, in the palace and the senate, and in the proconsulate of the Falkland Isles, and every other oracle was wrong. Once, and once only, it happened that Balbus (thank goodness!) died of a malaria fever that he caught in the Pontine marshes, and I really began to think I had got rid of him; but, a few pages afterwards Ego et Balbus quietly turned up again, sipping some wine of Cyprus that had been bottled in the consulship of Plancus, and setting everybody to rights as usual; history, public opinion, universal testimony, the creed of ages, I had to sweep away in a single sentence of indifferent Latin, with all the principal words crowded to the end of it, just as children keep their biggest suck-a-bobs to the last, and all upon the private authority of the preposterous Ego et Balbus.

When I left school and became an university man, I flattered myself that I had done with these gentlemen, ("whose foible was omniscience,") altogether. Alas! I then began to meet Ego et Balbus, for the first time, as a living firm—whereof Balbus was the Co.;—the sleeping partner, upon whose credit the whole concern existed. The momentous political question which then happened to be convulsing the Union Society, was, whether Peter the Great's foster-mother was a Moravian. One of the junior nobility was kind enough to rise, with arm extended and gown folded after the first classical models, and inform the honourable house, upon his honour of the actual and not to be doubted fact:

"I waive my hereditary rank," he said, "and stake my veracity—the veracity of a private gentleman—upon this matter, for I had it from my noble father himself."

I need not say that Ego et Balbus carried it by an overwhelming majority. Balbus, indeed, is almost always the Mrs. Harris of assertion, and exists only in the imagination and for the corroboration of Ego. He is in very great demand with the party who oppose themselves systematically to public opinion, and there is, happily for them, an unlimited supply of him. The government is, at all times, under the greatest obligations to Balbus; Ego is always ready with innumerable cases which entirely disprove the assertions of its calumniators, and put things in quite another view than that which they appear in to the world in general. He happens to have a friend (one Balbus) very poor, very proud, very wise, who has benefitted the country by his writing for half a century, whom the prime minister himself called upon in his garret—just as the Right Honourable Henry Boyle called upon Addison—and blessed him in the name of the people of England, and bestowed upon him three hundred a-year for life. Ego remembers, as if it were yesterday, the touching gratitude of a poor deserving fellow in the war department (one Balbus), who was made a head clerk, with goodness knows what salary, purely on account of his sagacity and diligence. Ego knows an instance of a tax being remitted in favour of a penniless patentee (of the name of Balbus), for a most useful invention, by a committee of sympathising officials, who paid the money out of their own pockets. "I could cite," says Ego (with perfect truth), "a hundred other such examples of ready assistance which government has held forth to talent, and of munificent reward which it has bestowed upon humble merit." Balbus's testimony, too, is by no means confined to the excellency of the executive of his own country. He knows, from his own personal observation, that the abbess and nuns of Minsk were dealt with rather leniently than the reverse; and that the late Emperor of Russia was distinguished for mildness of

character and Christian sentiments. Balbus formed also one of a benevolent board instituted by the King of Naples, to examine into the state of prisons throughout his dominions; and he knows ventilation, comfort, and scientific amusements to abound in them all, for the benefit of every political captive.

During the late war, this country was positively teeming with accurate Egos, and triumphantly disproving Balbi. Balbus was generally on service; and sending, by every post, "the actual facts, sir," to Ego, as they occurred. While the correspondents of every other journal, English and foreign, and of whatever sect or party, were unanimous in their censure of the delays, mismanagement, nepotism, ignorance, and imbecility of our government at home, Balbus was steady in its praise. He could see nothing but men with a superfluity of clothing, dwelling in comfortable wooden houses, and sipping ready ground and roasted coffee at their ease. He was in the trenches, where things occurred precisely different from what foolish people at home were led to believe; he was in the light cavalry charge at Balaclava himself, and must be allowed (said Ego) to know something about the Cardigan question. He was in the hospital at Scutari from the very first, and found everything clean and comfortable until the Times commissioner came and made a disturbance there, where he wasn't wanted; (Balbus generally knew something about the Times commissioner and correspondent, "personally, sir," and could tell something about them, if he chose, which would shut up those channels of false intelligence at once). He was in the Line, and had, upon his honour, a profusion of luxuries. He was in the Guards, and on the Staff, and had nothing for four and twenty hours to subsist upon, except a small piece of elder wood that had been steeped in rum. He had paid particular attention to the cavalry, and —with the drawbacks incidental to a state of war—he had never seen horses better provided for, than theirs. As far as his (Balbus's) observation went, he could not but record it as his opinion that both the government at home and the commanders abroad rather neglected their own relatives and connexions from feelings of delicacy, and went out of their way to promote unaristocratic desert. With regard to diplomacy, he would say that he had the honour of the friendship of a much maligned Lord, and that a more affable, sympathising, and unassuming minister did not exist: Ego, going about indeed, during that whole campaign, with Balbus's letters in his hand, was a new horror added to war.

Ego has a sincere pity for simple ignorant folks, who are led away by mere appearances, evidences, and results; and perhaps it is his noble and generous nature which always prompts him to side with very small minorities. He has a firm belief that the province and the interest of all public organs of intelligence is to lie as much as possible, and that one word of Balbus is better than a column of printed facts. He has a large clerical acquaintance (of the Balbi family), of great piety and learning, not one of whom has received a less meed of their merit than a canon's stall. He knows an entire regiment (the Balbi Buffs) where there is no such thing as jobbing or speculating upon commissions, and where the regulation prices are never exceeded. He has a humble friend (Ego is generally most magnificently connected, and hand in glove with the House of Lords and all the landed gentry, as appears abundantly in his conversation and anecdotes) who is a parish doctor—one Balbus, M. R. C. S. — who has a hundred pounds a year for attending a single district of two thousand souls, with medicines provided by the Board of Guardians, and who is considered by the county families as quite one of themselves. He has an intimate acquaintance with a London magistrate (Alderman Balbus) who has put the whole wife-beating business before him in its proper light. "The actual facts, sir" (one of Ego's most favourite clenchers), "are, that it is the woman's fault nineteen times out of twenty; that she is not beaten at all; that if she is, she likes to be beaten; and that any attempt to procure a separation would be the small end of the wedge for unchristianising the whole country."

Ego et Balbus on political and social questions are pretty well understood by this time. There was a good deal of mistaken delicacy at first on the part of the general public, as to whether it was correct to contradict Ego or to question the accuracy of his omniscient friend, as a matter of personal politeness; but the two at last grew insupportable. The House of Commons got hold of Balbus; but had soon to let him go again. "I hold in my hand," said Ego, rising in his place from the ministerial benches, "the proofs, the written proofs, of our perfect arrangements at Balaclava. I am not going to disclose the writer's name, indeed, to a nation excited to fury by a hireling press; but will content myself with calling him B——, Lieutenant B——." But, the opposition were not going to stand that sort of thing; and, on the very next night, to do them justice, they held in their hands whole reams of communications from *their* Balbus, giving quite a different account of Crimean matters.

In private life, however, and upon domestic, literary, and general matters, the two friends are as paramount as ever. They know something startling about the Emperor of the French before his accession; and when you have heard that, they can tell you something else about the Empress. Ego usually whispers these particulars under his breath, as if gendarmes were behind the door; and upon the authority, of course, of his reliable foreign friend, Monsieur Balbé.

Next to anecdotes about the Court, Ego is greatest, I think, in reminiscences of the camp and the forum; and in many of these—if he judge his audience to be a fit one—he will dispense with Balbus altogether; he then figures alone; generally, in racing experiences and tremendous winnings and losings at unlimited loo and brag. I have known—three—several Egos who have given me to understand by hint and nod, and affected secrecy, that they were the authors of that "Advice to persons about to marry," which appeared in Punch, as "Don't!" and I have known, at least, a score who were acquainted with that fortunate and well-paid Balbus, who received from five to five-and-twenty pounds for that brief witticism. The Englishman, in the Times newspaper, has been introduced to me (always by his personal friend) as Lord John Balbus, as Thomas Babington Balbus, Mr. Samuel Balbus, Q.C., and even as Mrs. Barker Balbus, and Miss Eliza Balbus, poetesses. In the days of the man in the iron mask, and during the circulation of the letters of Junius, Balbus must have had a busy time of it. He was worked pretty hard, when The Vestiges of Creation first came out, and lately, since the publication of Church Parties in the Edinburgh Review; nor is it indeed unusual for me to hear my own popular and brilliant articles appropriated, in toto, by the much-tempted Ego, on behalf of his anonymous but sparkling friend Balbus.

All of us, publicly and privately, individually and professionally, have suffered much, from this arrogating pair. Our only way is to treat their combined evidence as so much ghost-story which we will steadily refuse to believe, unless from the lips of the Principal; and, perhaps, not even then. There is very little fear of Balbus being produced in court, or anywhere else; but as for killing outright, and making an end of him, it is as much out of the question and as impossible, as in the old time, when he caught his deathly fever in the Pontine marshes.

THE LAST DAYS OF A GERMAN REVOLUTION.

Everybody recollects something of the German parliament that sat not very many years ago at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and has heard of the constitution emanating from it. In those days, princes had reasons of their own for promising some satisfaction to their subjects. Twenty-eight of them accordingly accepted this Germanic constitution, and some even went so far as to have it sworn to by their soldiers. Changes again occurring in the aspect of affairs, the princes began to back out of their pledges. Armies found that the oaths they had taken were accounted dead words after the lapse of a few weeks. Some of them were slow to understand why they were not to defend what they had sworn to defend; and among them, the army of the Grand Duke of Baden rose in a mass, declaring that it would defend the Germanic constitution, though it was their own prince who set it at defiance. The same thing occurred in the Bavarian Palatinate; and it was supposed that the same would occur also in Wurtemburg. These things gave courage to patriotic, or, if you will so have it, revolutionary people, and in the movement many joined—I among others. The proceedings in which I took part may be considered very democratic, and altogether wanting in respectability. For the reassurance of some readers, therefore, I may say, that the name I bear is known in history as that of one of the most famous kings of Hungary; my ancestors have been princes and kings, and have had emperors for blood-relations. When my great-grandfather settled in Prussia, he built a castle there, and bought about thirty knightly estates. My grandfather, who had twelve sons, became a Prussian general. Several of my uncles held also the highest rank in the Prussian army, and some fell in the French wars.

I was educated at the cadet-schools of Potsdam and Berlin; and, at the age of seventeen, passed as a lieutenant in the Prussian army. Then, I despised civilians, and talked against canaille. The long peace wearied me of drilling-ground, parade, and drawing-room. Reflections grew upon me. To the horror of all my aunts and she-cousins, I quitted military service; to the greater horror of all my uncles and he-cousins, I became an author. To crown my folly, I abandoned Prussia, and became a citizen of the free city of Frankfort; afterwards of Leipsic. The opinions expressed in my historical and other books, caused my name to be written in the black books of the governments of Germany. In February, eighteen hundred and forty-eight, I was in Paris; but not as a spectator only of the revolution there. Yet I had no part in the absurd schemes and foolish theories by which many of my comrades helped to bring the cause of public liberty to wreck. Fresh from the experience of Paris, I went to the revolted Grand Duchy of Baden, whence the grand duke had fled by night, sitting upon a gun-carriage.

I write this true sketch from personal experience of the extinction of a little German revolution, for an English public that has been taught to dwell rather unduly on its littleness. The Baden revolution—guided, no doubt, by the counsels of a great many foolish men; for there is no lack of hot-headed direction among democrats—was, at any rate, supported by a regular army of twenty thousand men, both cavalry and infantry; by plenty of very good artillery; by a militia (chiefly without arms) eighty thousand strong; and by many thousands of the citizens and people. The little revolution was so far considered formidable, that one hundred and twenty

thousand men, most of them Prussians, were sent to suppress it.

When Mannheim was attacked, General M— repulsed the Hessians from the Neckar side, near Käferthal, while I defended the Rhine side against the Prussians. The Hessians retired directly; but the fight with the Prussians lasted, with intervals of course, for three days and three nights. Though in this we had the upper hand, other events of the struggle forced us to quit Mannheim, and fall back upon the important fortress, then unfinished, of Rastadt. My regiment, which had been chiefly composed of the inhabitants of Mannheim, disbanded itself on our departure from that town, and I had nothing to do in Rastadt but make myself generally useful, until, when I was at the gate departing from the fortress, I was detained by the soldiers, and appointed by them chief of the general staff; which position burdened me with the defence of the place against the Prussians. To a public fresh from reading about Sebastopol, I shall say nothing of our little siege of Rastadt. We made sallies, and endured bombardments; but it was unreasonable that six thousand men should be left to their fate, without proper provisions, in an unfinished fortress, for the defence of which even twenty thousand would not have been force enough. Our little army was, moreover, disorganised, and the relief promised us in a fortnight, was thought about no more. We did all that was possible; and, after a siege of four weeks, when the commander-in-chief of the Prussians, General Count G—, summoned the fortress to surrender, and assured us that our case was hopeless, for that there was no sign whatever of an effort for our rescue, we asked leave, before giving him an answer, to send out beyond his lines persons who might see what hope the garrison could think itself entitled to maintain. This leave was given, and I went, accompanied by a Prussian officer, Count S—, and an old woman of a major of our own. We travelled through Baden to Constance, and assured ourselves that the garrison of Rastadt had been, a fortnight ago, left to its fate by the revolutionary army. The garrison, therefore, empowered me, after my return, to surrender on the best conditions I could get; but on some conditions, be they what they might, to surrender before nightfall. Many of the soldiers had become as unruly and as selfish as the meaner sort of men become on board a sinking ship. The stores had been all day ravaged by plunderers. At night, nobody could say whether, by some desperate wretch, the Prussians might not be let in, and the defenders of the fortress treated, not as the garrison of a surrendered town, but of a town taken by storm. All lost by this. The Prussian General had not been unwilling to accede to my suggestion that we should negotiate for our capitulation with the Grand Duke of Baden, a more merciful man than the Prince of Prussia was supposed to be. The necessity for an immediate surrender made the surrender almost unconditional. Some favourable points were, however, conceded in the few conditions written by the General Count G— himself; namely, that we should be treated as prisoners of war; that martial law should not be used against us; and that "only a few of the ringleaders should be submitted to an examination." The general promised to use his personal influence with the grand duke, in a way favourable to the garrison, and said he would remember me especially, if I caused the surrender to be effected throughout, without conflict or disturbance. In all that he said, and afterwards in all that he did, I believe Count G— meant well, and felt well, as an honest gentleman.

All having been arranged, the general, after he had written down the terms of the capitulation, rode away, as I was told, to the Prince of Prussia. He did not return; but there came, instead of him, a major of his staff, who said that he had powers to sign on his behalf. Knowing that there was much work to be done by a commander who had to organise among troops widely scattered, the prompt occupation of a town, I did not mistrust this substitution. Now, I believe, that it was meant to save the general from pledging his name to promises which it was thought inconvenient to fulfil. In the afternoon, therefore, we marched out to lay down our arms. Means of escape were offered to me by a friendly family. But flight at such a moment would of course have been an act of baseness. Yet, had I fled, I might have been fit for the friendship of a knot of men living by revolutions, and most careful not to die by them, who said that I had received a million of florins as the price of Rastadt, and that I was living at ease in Spain. I being, when they said this, at Bruchsal pining in a solitary prison.

On our way to the gates, I rode across the Rastadt market-place, and could not help laughing at sight of the town-hall decked out with the grand duke's colours, and the mayor and corporation on the balcony all ready to repeat, with a few modifications, the same speeches they had made but a few months ago to the victorious people. "Good bye, comrades," I cried to them; "the wind is changing, but your sails are admirably trimmed." A battalion of militia surrounded me with words of hearty sympathy, as if I were already going to be shot; for that fate was to be expected for us ringleaders.

Arrived at the last barrier of the fortress, I found, contrary to stipulation, the Prussian troops already upon the glacis. I cried out against this, and turned my horse. A Prussian lieutenant-colonel shouted to me, "You shall not return; stay here." "I go," I said, "to ensure order;" and rode back, followed

with insulting exclamations. In this spirit the whole act of surrender was met. I forbear details. Arms having been laid down, we were led by an officer and a strong guard through the main ditch into the largest of three forts of Rastadt. Our horses were taken from us, note being made of them, and of their owners' names; my carriage with our luggage, since it could not follow through the ditch, had gone round by the town gate, where it was plundered by the Prussian soldiers. The commandant, however, who was a brave and honest major, procured restitution. The fortress not being known to the Prussians, they were at a loss how to find quarters for us of the general staff; and we were kept waiting till dark before a locked-up wooden barrack. At last, there came up a Baden man, an officer, who for his petty tyranny had been both turned out and cudgelled by his troops. "So!" he said, "I can find fitter quarters than this barrack for the gentlemen of the staff." By his directions, we were led through a dark postern down a stone staircase to the lowest casemates; namely, those which served for the defence of the main ditch. Two little dens were there assigned to us; while, on our right hand, two hundred men were driven and penned like sheep in the casemates situated in the escarpe beneath the courtine. These places, never meant for human occupation, were dripping with water, and the unpaved floors were simply pools of mud. With nightfall, heavy rain set in, and the wind blew through the open loopholes, so that, although these events were happening in the midsummer season—for which reason many of us were clad thinly—we were very cold, and we felt severely the want of straw, light, bread, and water—severely, but not seriously. We chose to keep ourselves alive with song and laughter. Some of us had good store of cigars about us, and we bore our trouble well until we dropped one by one into our beds of mud, and slept. I did not like to throw myself on the ground without some little circumspection, and lighted a match, to get a brief glimpse of the corner I had chosen. A pair of fine large toads looked at me gravely with their brilliant eyes, whereat my exclamations awoke several sleepers, of whom one or two could tell of mysterious touches on the face and hands. We made no great stir, and I went to bed upon two majors. They, being sound asleep, I laid my head on one and my feet on the other, without putting them to any inconvenience.

Next morning, we were all in wretched plight. Major W—, always the trimmest man of the whole staff, was chattering with fever, moaning in French for coffee, roaring in Polish for destruction upon Prussians. Many of our men had taken, on the last day of their liberty, unwise draughts of the sour Baden wine, and were enduring agonies of thirst; while the whole atmosphere was thick and sultry from the breathing and smoking of so many people in so damp and narrow a den. The door was thundered at for water, and at last the Prussian sentinel brought us a bucket full, and set it on the staircase. Dirty as this water was, there was a rush for it—a fight for it. Many poor fellows crept back unsatisfied, with parched lips and throbbing heads. All this was little in accordance with the promises of General G— and the accepted terms of the capitulation. I wrote, therefore, a note to him in pencil, asking for dog's allowance, simply straw and water. Towards night, we got plenty of water, and some very bad bread. We had made friends with some Prussian soldiers, who procured for us a jug of wine. The cigars still held out, and we held out too, singing ourselves to sleep, as defiantly as ever.

On the morning following, my note produced its effect. We officers of the staff were ordered up to two small casemates situated on the berme of the main rampart. The berme being the brim of the main ditch on the escarpe, these casemates were above ground, and reasonably dry. Their loopholes were glazed, and a large window that opened on a little yard lying between them gave sufficient air and light. Straw, and a few coverlets and small comforts obtained for money, made this place of durance tolerable enough. In the course of a few more days, also, our relations with the Prussian soldiers underwent considerable change. They had been taught to regard the democrats as ruffians; they found that, if misguided, our common soldiers (with exceptions such as are to be found on both sides) were, on the whole, brave and kindly folk, sons of farmers and others—persons, in fact, of the same rank with themselves; while the leaders who misguided them—if it must be that they did misguide—were gentlemen, in fact, more courteous and humane than many of the officers they were themselves accustomed to obey. They found that we had treated kindly all the prisoners we had in Rastadt. Good-will sprung up, therefore, between us and many of the men appointed to keep watch about us. This happened the more easily, since, of the regiments that had been brought against us, several were notoriously disposed to sympathise with our opinions and efforts, and had been marched to Baden, with the cannon, ready loaded, at their backs. One regiment, not to be quelled, was disarmed upon the road and marched back into Prussia.

We were most annoyed by the conceit of the young officers, lieutenants and others, who took pleasure in coming among us to enforce homage, and, at a cheap rate, prove their dignity by a safe insolence towards their elders and their betters. Major W., commandant—though he was firmly of opinion

that we all ought to be shot—knowing what the terms of the capitulation had been, did all that he could to secure some approach to a fulfilment of them. He behaved like a gentleman and a Christian; and we honoured him, though we did wish that he had not held it to be part of his Christian duty to preach sermons to us about our sins, and our sins to our people in the different forts and bastions. Once, when some of the prisoners were shot while in the act of escaping, the major made sermons of their bodies, ordering them to be placed upon boards and exhibited in all the prisons.

The revolution being quenched, and the people utterly quelled, no compulsion to mercy pressed upon the conquerors. The government of Baden, conscious that it had provoked the outbreak by its own mismanagement, and being really in the hands of kindly men, was inclined to clemency. The Prince of Prussia and his adherents, glad of an opportunity, off their own ground, of inflicting a severe blow on the German democrats, without putting themselves to any inconvenience, urged severity. The promises of General Count G. were set aside as informal, being given without reference to a superior authority, that of the Prince, who was at the time present in Baden. Nothing more was said of us as prisoners of war; we were treated and spoken of as captured malefactors. Court-martial law was put in force against us, and our judges were Prussians—officers and soldiers of the regiments we had been fighting with; men who had seen their friends and brethren fall under our balls, who themselves carried wounds of our inflicting.

Especially were the Prussians eager for the punishment of such of their own countrymen, officers in their army, as had participated in the Baden outbreak. As I was known to have been at one time in the Prussian service, I was one of the first men called before the judge. It was not credited that I had ceased to be a Prussian and belonged to Saxony. I could have proved the fact easily, but gained several weeks of valuable time by leaving them to arrive at their own assurance in the due official way.

The spirit of revenge by which the Prussian leaders were actuated, seemed to us proved by the haste they showed in bringing M. E. to trial. This gentleman had been secretary to the parliament; and, during the Baden revolution, was attached as a non-combatant, to the ministry of war. During the siege of Rastadt, he kept up the spirit of our people by publishing a patriotic journal, in which the Prince of Prussia was not too politely dealt with. He was the first man whose blood soaked into the sand of Rastadt. The soldiers, not yet used to fusillades in cold blood, wavered, and the victim still living after the muskets had been fired upon him, was despatched with bayonets.

One of the next men shot, was our governor of Rastadt, whom at the time I found it hard to forgive for having resisted every request to destroy his papers before the entry of the enemy into the town. He would not, he said, burn historical documents; and so he left them to be seized, and to furnish evidence enough for the destruction of a score or two of lives. The governor was followed to the fatal ground by an old colonel. The bullets carried far away, a piece of his skull with one of his long grey locks attached to it.

Prussian soldiers brought us tidings of these things as we endeavoured to be cheerful in our casemates. Our servant had dressed some rough boards into a table and benches, upon which we played at chess with figures made of bread. The victuals allowed, being very bad, and the conditions under which the men lived fearfully unwholesome, great mortality arose among them—pent in the cells to which we had at first been taken; but of us, none became ill. We were better lodged; and a doctor, one of our fellow-prisoners, had wisely counselled us to make free use of cherry brandy. We had among us no small store of learning, wit, and knowledge of the world. Old Colonel K. had seen a good deal of service during the French war, to which his scars bore honourable witness. He had sojourned for a long time in Constantinople, and in several stations on the coast of Africa, whence he came to France. He had been on his way through Baden to his home, where he had wife and children, when he was made, by the revolutionary government, colonel of the Hungarian legion. We disliked his Austrian manners, and a too subservient way towards our conquerors; but, he was a brave man nevertheless. K.'s adjutant was a hungry fellow who could never wait for dinner, and was noisy in his sleep; for the last-mentioned crime he was banished of nights to an adjoining compartment of our casemate, where he talked to his Fanny, questioning her conduct, or quarrelling with her chocolate, which he said smelt horribly. Lieutenant T. who had been in Finland, sang us Finnish songs. Major R., who was an able engineer, told us of the adventures he had had in Venice and elsewhere. Major W., who had fought in Polish battles, had good military tales to tell, and as the most orderly man in our party, was elected major-domo of the dungeons. M. S., a handsome merry fellow, who had been editor of a liberal paper, and as a born Bavarian believed in beer, amused us with incessant jokes, and sang almost hourly his beer lyric of Hildebrand and his son Hadubrand. These were the sort of men who formed our company.

The first great shock to our mirth came one morning after we had finished our small dinner—a measure of soup with a bit of dog's meat in it—when we were invaded by a host of Prussian officers, corporals, even civilians,

and gens-d'armes, with sticks, who bade us pack up and prepare to march. We expected change of quarters, but were marched into a meadow, and there ordered to strip. We were searched rigidly; everything that we had of value, our watches and even our money, was taken from us, except an allowance of tenpiece a-piece for necessary extras to each person; and to me, as having held chief rank, the sum of half-a-crown. The reason assigned for these proceedings was the plundering by many of our soldiers in the last days of the siege; for the recovery of stolen property search had been made, the town authorities assisting, through all the prisons and upon the person of all prisoners. The result was, that in several casemates—especially those occupied by the artillerymen—much stolen property was found. For this reason we suffered insult and were robbed in turn. The rueful and indignant posse of staff officers in shirts and drawers must have very much amused our searchers, who, when they had done their bidding, pointed to a heap of old clothes, worn-out uniforms of common soldiers of the Baden army, out of which they bade us fit ourselves with garments. Old Colonel K., shaking with agitation of mind, grumbled in his beard that he had been among Turks and Moors, but never before had seen conduct like this. The Baden private soldiers are a lean race, and poor K. laboured in vain to get a portly person into any of the trousers placed at his disposal.

When we were all back in our kennel, we had several hours' amusement at the expense of one another. We were grotesque spectacles; most grotesque of all, our scrupulous friend S., whose handsome figure and neat dress had always been the envy of his clumsier companions. He had arrayed himself in a common soldier's jacket much darned, with exceedingly short sleeves, and reaching not quite to the waist, with only three buttons; trousers darned and patched in many places, ending not very far below his knees, wholly destitute of buttons, and slung over the shoulders with a piece of packthread. Old K. was still grumbling and trying impossibilities, while Major W., in a recruit's old clothes, pushed his cap back on his head, and practised the goose-step with great relish. The comedy became a tragedy next morning, when we discovered that these clothes were infested with vermin.

A day or two afterwards, I received orders from an officer to pack up and follow him. I did so with a heavy heart, for this looked like the beginning of the end. Before the postern I was detained to await the coming of another prisoner, who proved to be a gentlemen well known and honoured in England—Dr. Kinkel.* He had been fellow deputy with me at Berlin in the second democratic congress. I did not know that this good poet and able man had been in Baden, still less did I know that he was prisoner. We were led to the same bastion, but not quartered together. I was to replace, in a casemate on the second floor, a comrade who had just been shot. This chamber was built for prisoners, and its first inmate had been M. von Struve. My companion in it was a Bavarian major, who was confidently expecting to be indulged by his own government with a few years' arrest, as his offence had stopped short at the quitting of his regiment. The hope was vain. He was delivered up and shot. My position by change to this prison was again improved. We had pallets upon which to sleep, were allowed to procure books, and could get dinners from the town. There was also a yard in which we met other prisoners when suffered to take our daily airing.

One afternoon while I was confined here, Dr. Kinkel called to me; and, when I came to the window, told me that my wife was coming. She had written to me to die rather than fall into the hands of the Prussians; but, having fallen into their hands, was determined that I should not die if woman's zeal and devotion could prevent it. She had travelled to Potsdam; she had pleaded for my life with many influential persons; but they all told her that my destiny was in the hands of the generals at Baden. To Baden, therefore, she went next, and, being near me, spent her time almost incessantly on the road between Rastadt and Baden Baden, where she appealed to the General, Count G. Thence, too, she journeyed constantly to Carlsruhe, Mannheim, every place to which the least glimmer of hope enticed her.

Then it was that the desire became strong in me to save the life she valued. I wrote to General Count G., reminding him of his unsought promise to remember me if we completed without disorder the affair of the surrender. I even planned escape and ground upon our stones a rough key made of an iron hook torn from a shutter of the guard-house. It would turn one bolt of our lock, by the time that I learnt by a letter from Count G., and by report of others that he had been honourably mindful of his promise; that he had interceded for me with the grand duke; and that he meant again to do so. I wrote the good news to my wife, and began hoping.

My preliminary examination was conducted by a Baden judge, who acted with great fairness. Unfortunately, the late governor's historical documents were chiefly in my handwriting. I was charged, especially, with having commanded the bombardment of the Prussians in Ludwigshaven—opposite Mannheim—and with having delayed, by my speeches and actions, the surrender of Rastadt. Legal proofs would still have been difficult to bring against me if my adjutant in Mannheim had not—being absent in prison—received the news of the surrender of Rastadt as evidence

* See Household Words, Vol. ii., page 121.

of treason on my part, and therefore felt no hesitation to play traitor against me, by offering such evidence as, taken with everything else, left me few reasons to show against my being shot. The judge recommended to me, for my help before the court-martial, a very able advocate of Bruchsal. This gentleman busied himself in producing and rebutting evidence; but, knowing how court-martials act and think—since I had sat on them myself—I relied more on my own personal appeal. It was not usual to tell the prisoners beforehand on what days they were to be severally tried. A Prussian officer, however, had the courtesy to let me know that the fifteenth of September (one thousand eight hundred and forty-nine) was the day on which I was appointed to appear and answer for my life.

On the eve of that day I bade farewell to my friends, and, covering the window with a cloak, lights not being permitted, I prepared during the night my defence; then slept, while my good wife was busy in Mannheim searching after witnesses. She interested many who were to be brought up against me, and I think not without effect. In the morning the friendly hostess of the Three Kings, in Rastadt, sent me chocolate and a bottle of good wine, to give me courage for the work I had to do. Breakfast was not over when certain gens-d'armes—who had once been ready to lick my shoes—now distinguished themselves by brutality of manner in their dealings with me. They came to convey me to the palace. The carriage they placed me in moved very slowly, because of the throng of soldiers who escorted it. The people in the streets, who loathed these bloody court-martials, came to look at me often: not without loud expressions of their sympathy; and the gens-d'armes were busily engaged in taking note of the chief sympathisers.

The court-martial was held in a large saloon in the palace. I found it thronged; and there was a crowd without, to look in at the windows. One part of the room was raised two steps above the rest, and, on this dais, there sat behind a table covered with green cloth, my seven judges. To the right of them, within a pulpit, sate the public prosecutor with a secretary at a little table behind. A little lower down, on the same side, was the pulpit of the judge who had conducted the preliminary investigation. Parted from the space given to these officials by a barrier, was the pulpit of the counsel for the prisoner; and at its side was the bench on which I sat, having gens-d'armes with loaded arms at either elbow.

The public prosecutor charged me with every offence punishable by martial law, treason excepted; as I was not one of the Grand Duke's subjects. He exhibited me after the manner of a showman. "There, gentlemen, you see the fierce and bloodthirsty tiger; hitherto there have been brought before you, smaller vermin; but you see now the most cruel beast of the whole tribe." I was denounced in a speech full of virulent personal abuse as one of the beginners of European revolution, and as a person whom it was essential to see instantly shot. My own advocate wrote on a slip of paper which he gave me, that he was much pleased by this unskilful behaviour. When my turn came to defend myself, I spoke for two hours; speaking for my life, and trusting merely to the tone of this direct address for any chance of life I had. The speech was published and praised even in hostile papers. The impression made by it on the assembly was certainly favourable.

It was then asked by the President of the court whether I wished the witnesses to be sworn? They were sworn, and they perplexed the court much by their evidence. They were most of them artillerymen, who had served under my orders; and in a former process against one of their captains (believing me to have escaped into Switzerland), they had, for the benefit of their imperilled comrade, diverted all the blame they could from him to me. Now that I was on the prisoner's bench, they were desirous to reverse their policy, and gave their evidence as far as they could with a view to my acquittal. The public prosecutor losing temper, exclaimed to the judges, "If you do not condemn this fellow, the world will say you favoured him because he was your countryman." The audience, chiefly composed of Prussian officers, murmured its indignation. "It is more likely that the world would say he was condemned because he was your countryman," my counsel answered, and he then made an excellent speech on my behalf.

While my counsel was speaking I looked at my judges, and saw little hope in their faces. One, was a fair insignificant-looking corporal, who was evidently feeling the discussions tedious. Another, was a thin pale young second lieutenant, with a little head on a long neck. The captain was evidently one of those whose soul poured itself out only on drill; he had nothing in his head but buttons and shoe leather. The first lieutenant was a man who drank, and had wine in his brains. The serjeant was a man with a black beard, who kept his eyes gloomily fixed on the table, and the common soldier was a man after the shape and pattern of the major, who sat as president of the court in the middle, stout and stolid. When these judges retired, I was taken into another room where a captain, who had been in youth one of my comrades at the cadet house, shortened the time for me with his conversation. After the lapse of half an hour he bade me take courage, for the long deliberation was unusual, and a sign of disagreement among the members of the court. The deli-

beration came, however, to an end, and I was led back to my bench. The judges entering five minutes afterwards, looked rather flushed, but that was all. "Whatever the verdict," whispered my advocate, "I am sure you will bear it like a man." The court was hushed, and, the whole assembly standing, a long decision was read by the president, ending with this: "Sentenced to death by being shot, and to pay the expenses."

A low murmur ran through the assembly. The blood seemed to run back to my heart for an instant. But I was soon myself again, and might have smiled had I not known that my poor wife was awaiting the decision of the court, only a few houses off. I thanked my advocate. It was the dark serjeant, who I knew had been holding out against his officers. The gensd'armes accompanied me back to the carriage which was waiting in the castle yard. A crowd surrounded us; but my thoughts were only with my wife in the hotel of the Three Kings. At last the gensd'armes entered the carriage, and it travelled slowly over the rough pavement, Prussian soldiers guarding it. In the upper story of the inn, all windows were closed; but, as we turned the corner I heard a shriek from behind one of them of the ground-floor, and saw a hand stretched towards me. I recognised my wife's voice and leaned out towards her. The gensd'armes pushed me back into my seat, and the coach rolled on.

I have told how the Baden revolution was quelled. The story of what befel me as a sentenced revolutionist is more personal. I will tell it; but not to-day.

ENGLISH COAST FOLK.

Earth describers connect the mountain system of the British islands with what they call the Scandinavian range. Botanists find the Scandinavian flora upon the British mountains. The portion of the Scandinavian range which forms the mountain system of Scotland, running from north-east to south-west, rises in the north-western part of Scotland into a table-land about a thousand or two thousand feet high, which ends abruptly in the sea. It is covered with heath, grass, and peat-mosses. Some of the remnants of the Highlanders inhabit it still; and the green patches among the brown heath, mark the sites of the homes of the expatriated Celts, and the spots from whence they have been cleared away to make room for sheep and grouse. When seen from the top of Ben Nevis, the monarch of her mountains, Scotland seems a vast range of blue hills inlaid with silver lakes. The west coast is wild and the east is bleak. The west was the land of the Celts, and the east of the Pights. The bleak but fertile east coast is cultivated by farmers who gain prizes in the agricultural competitions of the world. At the mouths of the rivers of the east coast, from Berwick to Cromarty, are a series of seaports whose ships rival, for strength and speed, the best afloat.

I submit to the ethnological student, that there is a curious coincidence and a striking analogy between the physical and botanical geography and the oceanic supremacy of the united kingdoms. Just as the mountains belong to the Scandinavian range, the sovereignty of the seas can be traced to the Scandinavian colonies established upon the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland. Like our mountain flora, our seafaring population is chiefly of Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian origin. Wherever a port gave harbourage to ships, and wherever a fishing-station could be set up, the Northmen seized possession of the coasts, firths, bays, and embouchures, of the British islands. The northern pirates, as the Latin nations called them, who alarmed the Gauls of the Seine—the Celts of the Moray, and the Saxons of the Humber, a thousand years ago—were indeed what they called themselves, the sea-kings of their time, and Britannia is their daughter. Researches into the origins of nations give a Scandinavian genealogy to the Lady of the Trident on the backs of the copper coins, and the great ship seen at her feet far in the offing is her inheritance.

Charlemagne wept when he first saw the sails of the Normans. Historians say he rose up from table, and going to a window which looked towards the east, gazed from it a long time immoveable upon the ships in the distance. Tears streamed down his cheeks. Nobody dared to speak to him. "My faithful," said he to the grandees around him, "I do not fear these pirates for myself. But I am afflicted that during my lifetime they have dared to insult this shore. I foresee the evils they will inflict upon my descendants and their people." Charlemagne was what is politely called a conqueror, and unpolitely a brigand, and, of course, he had an intense disapprobation of a pirate. However, brigandage and piracy appear indeed hitherto to have disputed the mastery of the world. Conquerors or brigands, from Timor, Alexander, and the Cæsars, down to the Osmanli, the Hapsburgs, the Romanoffs, and the Bonapartes have lorded it over the populations of the continents of Europe and Asia. Their rods of iron, encased in gold and called sceptres, have terrified into slavery the generations and races of men inhabiting the vast regions which stretch from the deserts of Siberia to the Straits of Malacca. Timor, Charlemagne, and Bonaparte have had one and the same fixed idea: "There is but one master in heaven, and there ought to be but one master on earth." When, a thousand years ago, Charlemagne saw the sails of the sea-kings, he may have felt truly and prophetically that it was all over with the sovereignty of the Cæsars. He saw a race who could strike, and then, by spreading their sails to the winds, become unapproachable. Steam and artillery

have not given the British of the nineteenth century a greater superiority over the Chinese, than their ships gave the Normans over the Franks of the ninth century. After domineering for a hundred years over the north of France, a Frenchified colony of Scandinavians, expressing northern ideas in Roman words, came over to England, and calling themselves conquerors, because the Norman pretender was victorious over the Saxon pretender, have ever since given themselves the airs of masters among the inhabitants of the British islands.

The coast folk of the British islands, by whom I mean the populations of Scandinavian origin, although they may not now be all addicted to seafaring pursuits, are the truest descendants and representatives of the Normans. Their names prove it. Were I asked, what is the great distinctive peculiarity of the Scandinavian, as distinguished from the Asiatic, Greek, and Roman nations? I should answer individual independence. From Paris to Pekin you will find the notion prevalent, that it is right to have a master and obey his will.

The passion for independence, which lords it over the whole of Scandinavian manners, has expressed itself in many ways. I find its all-pervading spirit in everything I have read and everything I have observed of them. When Rollo, the ancestor of William, was bought with the duchy of Normandy to become a Frenchman; Charles the Simple, the French King, required the duke to kiss his foot as his subject. The pirate refused, and requested a soldier to do it in his stead. When the soldier stooped to kiss the foot he seized hold of it and threw the monarch on his back. I have seen a similar pride among the Scotch Coast Folk. When the last of the Stuarts, instigated by their Jesuit advisers, tried to extinguish presbyterianism in Scotland, not a few martyrs were found bearing Scandinavian names. No doubt faith was strong in the Covenanters, but the hereditary independence of race must be counted for something in making up the strength of the heroism of which Scotland was the scene.

The Scandinavian independence manifests itself among the Scotch Coast Folk by a severe abhorrence of debt. The penny wedding is a contrivance to avoid debt. Parisian work-people and French peasantry get into debt, proverbially, to give princely entertainments at their weddings. A short detention, they say, is of no consequence at the outset of the long journey of life. The Scotch fishers differ from this opinion entirely. A baker whose shop is near the head of the Leith Walk, Edinburgh, said to me, "I never refused credit to any of the Newhaven fishers, and I never had a bad debt. During thirty years I have not lost thirty pence by them, even from mistakes." The humiliation of alms is still more unknown than the humiliation of debt. Indeed when any great calamity occurs, such as the loss of many nets, or several boats, they accept gratefully the money subscribed for them. Probably they distinguish, clearly enough, that in the presence of calamity no man upon earth can be independent of his fellows. But pauperism, the regular dependence of the poorer class upon the richer classes of society, is an unknown abuse.

The stern austerity of their manners in the last century was only another expression of their hatred of the humiliation of man by man. Just as the Courts of Louis the Fourteenth and Louis the Fifteenth, of a Duke of Weimar, or a King of Oude (where the place of royal mistress was an object of ambition to all courtly families) are natural sequences of Cæsarism, the stern punishment of the profligacy which humiliates one man to another is a natural sequence of the proud independence of the sea-kings. Every young woman lived under the protection of the flag of the boat of her father. Every bride was enfolded in the flag of the boat of her husband. However stern the punishments of profligacy may have been in former ages in Scandinavia, in the last century they had softened in Scotland into ducking in the river and riding the stang or pole. The Scottish Coast Folk had ideas exactly the reverse of the French, among whom court manners became popular morals. The results are as greatly contrasted as the ideas. In Paris every third inhabitant is legally no man's child. This saddest of all the forms of infancy does not occur in some fishing villages in Scotland once within the memory of man. Surely a hereditary code of manners which almost abolishes this form of cruelty, by which life itself is inflicted as an affliction upon innocence, is worthy of the study of the students of society!

A story which was often told me with solemn awe, of a winter evening, related to an occurrence which took place at the Bridge of Don in the last century. A wealthy family from the south came to reside in a mansion in the neighbourhood. They brought with them several servants; and, among them an impudent fellow who soon excited against himself the general detestation of the villagers by his effeminacy and insolence. On arriving, the family took into their service an orphan girl whose father had been drowned at sea, whose mother had died of grief, and whose only brother had entered the navy during the American war. He had been persuaded to take this step by the gentlefolk who undertook to take care of his sister. The modesty, beauty, and forlornness of the orphan girl made her a general favourite. Early one morning the news spread from cottage to cottage that the young nursery-maid had disappeared during the night. Fears were entertained lest she should have fallen down among the rocks of the chasm and been hurt, killed, or drowned in the Black Nook. That morning the fishers

neglected the salmon, the labourers their fields, the workmen their shops; and the search for the lost girl was the business of the whole population. The poor young girl was found, sitting upon a ledge of rock in the chasm, with her head just under the water, and her rigid hands clutching the edge of the ledge as if they were iron. How she could have managed to climb down, and where such a mild young creature could have got the courage of despair to hold fast while drowning, were subjects of discussion often discussed by serious people for many years afterwards. The explanation is in the physiological nature of asphyxia. The moment respiration ceases, the whole machine stops. When what Professor Flourens calls the brain of respiration, is touched; when this vital knot is destroyed, the muscles retain their position, just as all the wheels and both the hands of the dial of a watch mark the instant when the main-spring snapped. The aged woman who performed the last offices of the dead, found out that the girl had been betrayed by her lover, her unpopular fellow-servant. Proving his guilt by his cowardice, the fellow fled from the house. The enraged villagers suspected he had taken refuge among the trees and rocks of the northern cliff which over-hangs the chasm, and the sullen stream flowing through it. When his hiding-place was discovered, the village young men started off after him; and rarely has there been a more fearful chace. His fears exaggerated his danger; and, to escape the exposure of riding the stang or pole through the village, he risked death. Leaping from rock to rock; swinging himself from tree to tree; scrambling among shrubs and bushes; concealed and discovered; now fancying himself in security, anon perceiving his pursuers to be surer-footed and more daring than he was; he baffled the lads who hunted him as if he were a badger or a weasel, until he reached the very precipice beneath which his victim had been found a corpse. The crowd apprized him of the fact by their cries of execration. Farther escape had become impossible, for he was surrounded and hemmed in on all sides. Remorse and terror deprived him of his head. After staggering and spinning round, he fell, and rolled from ledge to ledge into the depths of the Black Nook. When the boat which rowed swiftly to the spot fished him up, the boatmen picked a flattened corpse out of a red circle of water in the river.

Except as regarded a few simple homely household joys, the ideas of amusement and recreation were sternly excluded from their customs and manners. Youth was brought up in accordance with the Miltonic line,

"To scorn delights and live laborious days."

Their love of independence gave them curious notions of hospitality. Diners-out generally will deem their notions exceedingly odd. Spongeington, of the ancient and noble family of the Spongeingtons, will learn their views with equal surprise and scorn; and I fear he will say they are beneath contempt, without deigning to specify precisely what depth this may be. When an uninvited or unexpected guest arrived, although a relative, friend, or auld acquaintance, the circumstance was not allowed to involve the family in any unforeseen or unwelcome expenses. He stood treat. It was not the host, but the guest, who paid the extraordinary expense of the social jollification. When the visitor arrived, he wished to give the children a treat, having been a child himself, although now so big, and sent one of them to the grocer's for the luxuries of the entertainment, including tea, sugar, and spirits. The children, grateful for their sweet things, always boasted of the liberality of their visitor. "Uncle Willie came on Saturday, and was (spent) three shillings among us." "Uncle Sandy was four shillings the last time he was o'er the water"—across the river. The Scottish coast notion is just the opposite of the idea which reigned in Castle Rackrent of Hibernian renown; and perhaps it is none the worse for that. All over England and Scotland, wherever there is a neighbourhood, there is a conspiracy among the gentry to give mutual dinner parties. Many a struggling man, when sunk into difficulties by them, has been ready to fancy them plots to—although far enough from games at—beggar my neighbour.

But, the fishers were hospitable at their own times and in their own ways. Old Christmas or "aul' yeel" was always a season of good cheer. Labour ceased for several days. No boats went to sea. The men lounged about, and might be seen in the early part of the day at the gable-ends of their houses, keeping themselves warm by swinging their arms with a movement which flaps or claps the hands against the shoulders. They know their places in the world too well to venture to remain within doors in the way of the women who were busy preparing the feasts. Every boat's crew gave a treat on yeel day to their wives, their children, and a few invited guests. Generally, the guests were persons whose lot in life was lonely—such as single women, widows, and widowers. The fare was capital. The soup was Scotch broth, a soup only surpassed by Scotch hotch-potch: of course I say this as an unprejudiced Scotchman. The broth was ladled out of the pot, which stood near the fire, as it was wanted. The only fish eaten was a dainty preparation of dried skate, herbs, and other ingredients called tyawven. I find myself sucking my lips at the recollection of it. Did you ever eat it? No, of course not. Well, never mind; we can't all have eaten tyawven. However, I cannot see why tyawven may not be used as an expression of insolence as well as caviare.

Have I not belonged for forty years to the multitude who have had caviare thrown in their faces? If a preparation of the roe of sturgeons has furnished an occasion for three centuries of sneers, why not permit a little self-glory over a preparation of ray-fish? Roast beef and mutton formed the solid strata of the gastronomical creation. A cake made of flour, raisins, and currants, was placed in the middle of the table, and attracted the happy eyes of the children. The table equipage was less ample, it must be confessed, than was desirable. There was a deficiency of earthenware plates. Only the carvers had knives, with which they hewed down the meat, which was eaten by the company with old-fashioned five-pronged forks. Indeed, some of the young lads would take out their sailors' clasp knives from their pockets, and cut their meat upon ships' biscuit.

Beer, brandy, hollands, rum, and whiskey, were the drinks of the feasts. The spirit was drunk out of turned cups or coopered coggies. A foreign gold coin was sometimes sunk into the bottom of the cup or coggie as an ornament to it. The coggies were pretty little things, holding about as much as a couple of wine-glasses, and built of alternate pieces of red and white woods. They were sometimes hooped with silver. The coggie was handed round repeatedly. Every child had a mouthful. Everybody was very merry, and the children laughed the loudest, although they did not understand all the jokes. Those who could sing, sung; and those who could tell a story, told one. When the party broke up, the remnants of the feast were divided among the women and children; and all went home sober, if with a drappie in their ee, and pleased and happy.

But I must conclude what I have to say of the true Normans. Just because I have had better opportunities of observing the coast folk in Scotland, I have written most about them, while well aware that colonies equally worthy of study are to be found upon other coasts. Unlike the Frenchified Normans of the court of the French Duke of Normandy, the Normans planted on the shores of the Arctic and Atlantic oceans from Iceland to the Bay of Biscay, have always been distinguished by their excellence in the seafaring arts. They have everywhere been marked by certain great characteristics. They are seamen and fishermen whose mission it has been to chase salmon, herrings, cods, seals, bears and whales. They have an hereditary knowledge of ship and boat-building, and ship and boat-sailing. If not prior to any other race of men, better than any other race of men have they known how to brave and baffle the perfidies of winds and waves. Whatever they may be called—Finns, Pights, Swedes, Danes, or Basques—their chief physiological and social characteristics are identical. Everywhere they are rather broad than tall, with large round heads, broad brows, straight noses, deep-set eyes, and finely-chiselled lips and chins. As for the colour of the skin, hair, and eyes, it would be a mistake to look for the signs of race in the effects of climate. The simplicity, liberty, and equality of the manners of the Basques of Castile astonish equally French democrats and Spanish hidalgos. Fundamentally, the institutions of this race are identical on the shores of the Bay of Biscay and upon the coasts of the fiords of Norway. Unlike Mohammedans and Latins of every shade, who dream of conquest by the sword on the land, they pursue greatness in ships upon the sea. Everywhere they refuse to be taxed without being represented. Everywhere they claim for every head of a family a share in the legislation and administration of his country. Everywhere they insist upon the publicity of public affairs. Liberty of speech is maintained among them by frank discussions, independent opinions, and satiric verses. Nowhere have they permitted the feudal hierarchy to establish itself among them. Despising the insolence of distinctions of rank and the puerilities of vanity, their only title of superiority is simply the head of a home: the "etcheco yuana" of the Basques being the "goodman" of the Scotch. Nowhere do they deem any honest trade degrading. The nations of the world are powerful upon the sea in proportion to the numbers of the Scandinavian population upon their coasts, a circumstance which shows the importance of the characteristics of this race in the history of the human species.

The explanation of this great destiny is easily found. It all comes from the whale fishing. Heraldry proves that the first renown bestowed among men and transmitted to families came from slaying wild beasts, many of them probably the monsters of paleontology; but, of all the animals likely to task the courage of men and train them for victory in sea-fights, there is none comparable to the whale. The man who first harpooned a whale must have raised the standard of human courage and address. I have seen whales in the free sea measuring a hundred feet long from snout to tail, and blowing spouts thirty feet high. Why, the victory of men over whales is the conquest of Brobdingnagians by Lilliputians! The race brought up to harpoon whales, were unconsciously trained for success in naval battles against men. The harpooner was the apprentice sea-king. Of Otho, a Norman, it was said in the ninth century that he had harpooned sixty whales in two days. Hence the tremendous prestige for courage of the race—a prestige which explains why the Franks preferred to buy the friendship of the Normans with money, rather than brave their hostility in battle. After a thousand years of braving the battle and the breeze, the consequences of the superiority of the sea-kings have become apparent, and to see

them you have only to whirl round your terrestrial globe, marking where their descendants are located as masters, in America, India, China, and Australia. Whaling gave the superiority of the seas; and this sovereignty once obtained over the three-fourths of water, the sovereignty over the one-fourth of rock rising up in it seems an inevitable consequence; a consequence already so far secured that it would probably not be prevented were a geological catastrophe to send a tidal wave over the British islands and submerge them for ever. The supposition is indeed not refreshing, even in the dog-days; but it expresses what I think is the dominant fact of the condition of mankind in the middle of the nineteenth century. Moreover, geological catastrophes apart, while the British islands retain their unrivalled geographical position, and while their coast folk shall continue to possess the ancient qualities of their forefathers, the British nations will probably hold their present place among men; and the jealousy of rivals, whether on the Western or Eastern continents, is not likely to diminish the shadow of Britannia.

WISHES.

On Bramshill's terrace walks Lady Clare;
O were I the purple peacock there
That's petted and smoothed by her hand so fair!

Lady Clare strolls through Bramshill's grounds!
O were I one of those white greyhounds
That, patted by her, break off in bounds!

O happy falcon! O might I stand
Hooded and jessed on Lady Clare's hand,
To stoop at the heron at her command!

In Bramshill's chamber a cage is hung;
O that to its gilded perch I clung,
To be coax'd by her as I scream'd and swung.

O were I the silver cross, so blest!
In Bramshill's chapel devoutly press'd,
By Lady Clare, to her heaving breast!

By Bramshill's carven confessional chair
Kneels Lady Clare, her heart to bare;
O were I the grey monk listening there!

But ah! that I were the locket of pearl
In her bosom hid; or, more blest, the curl
It treasures! O prized love-gage of the Earl!

Ride on, O Earl, by her palfrey's side!
O that I by Lady Clare might ride!
That she were to be, O Earl, my bride!

AMERICAN PARTY NAMES.

The difficulty of understanding American politics arises, in the first place, from the fact that the difference between the great parties of the nation has, for some time past, been not one of principle, the contest between them having had reference to the best persons to occupy the federal offices, and perhaps to the best application to existing requirements of principles of government equally approved by all. Each party has been for a long time claiming to be the best defender and administrator of the democratic republican political theory of America, to which there are no avowed opponents.

At the present time there are four organised national parties; practically, however, as is always the case on the approach of a presidential election, there are but two—the administration and the opposition; or, as they now call themselves, the Democratic and the Republican. The latter party are also called the Free-soilers, their purpose being to check the extension of slavery, and are opprobriously termed Negro-worshippers. The administration party is sometimes designated, in return, Negro-drivers.

The innumerable sub-classifications, arising on points of merely local or temporary interest, greatly puzzle a foreigner. If there be, for instance, a discussion in any state with regard to a change of the local laws licensing dram-shops; immediately there is formed a Liquor-law and an Anti-liquor-law party in that state; and, as questions of this kind arise in different states, the local parties moving for a similar object, take to themselves different names. Thus, on the licence question they are Moral suasionists, Free liquorites, Anti-coercionists, and receive other opprobrious designations from their opponents, such as Rumies, the Drunkard's party, &c. Then came the compound designations as Liquor Democrats, Temperance Americans, Rum-Republicans.

Besides these, there are titles expressive of minor differences and of cliques and cabals within the regular national parties. The names used for this purpose are generally derived from some accidental circumstance. In a meeting of the democratic party in the city of New York, the friends of a certain candidate for that party's support, finding themselves likely to be outvoted, attempted to break up the meeting by putting out the lights: the friends of the opposing candidate, however, remained; and one of them, having in his pocket some matches of the sort then called loco-foco, re-lighted the lamps, and the meeting was re-organised. Hence the term Loco-foco was first applied to one of these temporary local divisions: afterwards it came to have a wider application.

Of similar character are the names Hard Shells, Soft Shells, Half Shells, by which the two extremes, and a neutral division of the democratic party in New York, are designated. Hard, in this case, has the significance of stubbornness; a Hard shell, meaning an impenetrable skull. As soon as this term began to be applied, the Hard Shells retorted by applying the term Soft to the rival faction.

Soft Shells are also called Shedders,—this being the fisherman's synonym for soft-shelled crabs and lobsters. In New York, where oysters are more largely consumed than anywhere else in the world, they are cooked and served in a great variety of forms. One of these is called, Roasted on the half shell. Some one, favouring a compromise and union of the factions of hard and soft, was set down as a Half Shell. An Adamantine is a radical, or ultra Hard Shell.

Of the same sort are the words Hunker, Barn-burner, Silver-grey, Woolly head, Fogie, Bentonite, and Anti-Bentonite, Pierce-Democrat, Buchanan-Democrat, Seward-Republican, Fremont Republican, North American, South American. Hunker is derived from a popular nickname for a self-satisfied, wilful, surly rich man; a descendant of Old Hunks in fact. Barn-burner, probably from a charge of incendiarism having been resorted to by one faction for the purpose of preventing a meeting of its rivals. Silver-grey (a term applied to a certain coloured horse) politically means a worshipper of the past,—a hoary-headed conservative. Woolly-head is the retort; referring to sympathy with the negro-slave. Fogie means a man who is befogged with regard to the demands of the present time, and who stupidly holds fast to old traditions and dead issues. It is the corresponding term, in one party, to Silver-grey in another.

The national parties are organised or re-organised once in four years by National Conventions. The delegates to these conventions are generally appointed in state conventions; the members of the state conventions by county conventions; the members of the county conventions at township, ward or school—district "Primary Meetings" of all who avow or profess themselves friendly to what are generally understood to be the purposes of the party. The primary meetings are also called Caucuses, which word is supposed to have had its origin in such meetings having been once held in a caulker's loft.

At the national conventions, candidates for the Presidency and Vice-presidency are agreed upon, and a series of resolutions is adopted setting forth the views and purposes of the party, and designating the line of public policy proposed. This series of resolutions is what is called the "platform" of the party; meaning the ground on which it stands, and which its candidates will maintain. Each subject of the platform is spoken of as one of its planks; thus we read of "the slavery plank," "the tariff plank," "the annexation plank." These conventions meet at places and times previously appointed by special committees, usually from five to seven months before the presidential election. The period between their session and the election is termed "the presidential campaign." The different conventions are referred to under the title of the town in which they meet; as the Cincinnati, or Pittsburgh, or Philadelphia convention. If two conventions meet simultaneously in the same town they are distinguished by the names of the halls in which they assemble. Thus we now read of the Apollo convention, which met lately in a music-hall of that name in New York. The Times speaks of the Cincinnati convention, as a convention of the citizens of Cincinnati; but this was the national convention of the administration party, meeting at Cincinnati, but probably, with no more than one citizen of Cincinnati taking part in its proceedings.

Until quite recently the question of the extension of slavery had never been a direct or main one between the great national parties. Moderate men of both parties and of all parts of the union had always laboured to prevent its becoming so; and, whenever the danger of it seemed imminent, had always succeeded in arranging some compromise by which the grand issue was deferred and a truce obtained, until a new attempt to extend the territory of slavery was made.

For some time before the presidential campaign of eighteen hundred and fifty-two, the leading democrats in several of the southern states refused to act with the national democratic party, and threatened—unless it adapted itself to their purposes—to withdraw from it a large number of southern votes. The state of South Carolina—in which the ultra-slavery school of politicians is strongest, was unrepresented in the convention which nominated General Pierce for the presidency. The leading minds of that convention believing that it was absolutely necessary to the success of the party that it should obtain the active co-operation of this school, introduced into their platform several unprecedentedly strong pro-slavery planks, or anti-free-soil resolutions, daubed over, to hide their purpose of courting the nullifiers and secessionists, with expressions of pure attachment to the Union. The result vindicated their sagacity as politicians. Every Englishman will understand why, who remembers how easily the manufacturing class acquired a conviction of the inexpediency of the Corn Laws, and how impossible it was to get a farmer to see them in the same light. No one at the North finds his income immediately and perceptibly reduced by the extension of slavery; and to secure a vote against it, it is necessary to convince a man of its immorality, and to get him to act on that conviction, and perhaps that conviction alone. But every slaveholder, and every man dependent directly or indirectly on slaveholding, knows that any annexation of slave territory, any extension of the field of slave-labour, at once puts money into his pocket, whatever may be its ultimate consequence to the nation. General

Pierce was elected, and, in gratitude for th aid he had received from the ultra-slavery party, appointed, to an important seat in his cabinet, one of their number.

Two years before this election, when the Fugitive Slave Laws were in agitation, there had been an assemblage of delegates at Memphis from every slave state, with the object of threatening the withdrawal of the Slave States from the Union. It was then proposed to form an independent slave republic, in which should be included with the seceding states of the present Union, Cuba, and such proprietors in South America, as from the interest in slavery of the proprietors of estates in them, could be induced to favour the scheme. There is no doubt that such a purpose is still kept in view by many of the "nullifiers" (of the Federal laws), "secessionists" (from the Union), and "filibusters," or land pirates. These party names included the entire ultra-slavery school of southern politicians. Their present plan is to strengthen the slave interest, and to circumscribe and weaken the interest of free labour within the present Union as much as possible, before openly organising their ultimate schemes.

About eighteen hundred and twenty, the State of Missouri was admitted into the Union, with a slaveholding constitution and with the privilege, common to all the slave-states, of representation in the National Congress more largely, in proportion to the number of its citizens, than is permitted any of the free states. The bill for this purpose had been strongly opposed by the representatives of the free states at the time, and finally passed only after a stipulation had been attached to it, to prevent the further extension of slavery ever after, in the region west of Missouri and north of a certain parallel of latitude. This stipulation was solemnly recorded in the archives of the nation, and the series of measures had been considered as a sacred compact between North and South; and under the name of the Missouri Compromise has been reverenced equally with the original constitution of the federation. It was in its nature unrepealable, the South having long since secured the chief advantages it had to gain from it. Nevertheless, by the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, it was in express terms declared to be repealed, the Southern members of Congress excusing the infamous breach of faith of which they were guilty in supporting it, on the ground that the proposal came from the north, and that they were simply accepting what was offered them. As if a prisoner of war, having broken his parole of honour, could be justified by pleading that the means of escape had been offered him by a traitorous sentry.

With a few honourable exceptions, the Kansas-Nebraska bill obtained the support of all the Southern Members of Congress, without regard to previous party distinctions. Not one of the previous friends of the administration from the south deserted it, and it gained many more from its Southern opponents than it lost of its previous Northern friends.

At the succeeding elections, however, it was found that the northern constituencies, were less ready than their representatives to yield to the demands of the fanatics of the south; and in the second congress of the Pierce administration—that now in session—the lower house, after a struggle of many weeks, could only organise itself by electing a decided free-soiler from Massachusetts as its speaker.

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill opened to settlement two large districts of the public domain hitherto reserved from purchase by immigrants. All restriction, as I have said, was removed from slavery; but it was left for those who might chance to be inhabitants at some future and undefined time—when it should please Congress to permit them to govern themselves as independent states of the confederacy—to establish or abolish slavery within their borders, according to the will of a majority. Previously to such time, a limited local legislation, in a method similar to that of the British colonies, was provided for.

Nebraska, far north, and adjoining existing free states, was impracticable to a slave immigration. Kansas, a much more attractive field, adjoins the slave state of Missouri. Emigration thither, from the north, being difficult and expensive, chiefly proceeded under the guidance—and with the economical advantages, obtained from wholesale contracts with railways, steamboats, and hotels, of land-speculation and commercial companies, called Emigrants' Aid Societies. As the time approached for the election of the local legislature, it was ascertained that a large majority of the settlers were hostile to slavery. The people of Missouri, however, having previously organised for the purpose, came into the territory, on the day of the election, by thousands, in armed bands, took possession of the ballot-boxes, and elected a legislature to suit their own views. The legislature thus elected enacted a series of statutes, to terrify Free-soilers from coming into the territory; forbidding, for instance, sentiments unfriendly to slavery to be advocated or uttered, on penalty of two years' imprisonment; and punishing with death any one even unintentionally assisting a slave to escape from the service of his master. These enactments were also constituted unrepealable for six years.

Under pretence of enforcing these laws, the Missourians gathered a mob of six or seven hundred ruffians, led by several wealthy slaveholders, with which they first seized an arsenal of the United States, and took from it several field-pieces; after-

wards marching on Lawrence, the chief town of the territory. The Free-soilers, however assembled there in unexpected numbers, threw up entrenchments, and, being apparently prepared to offer strong resistance, the pro-slavery army, after threatening the town for a week, and plundering every traveller who attempted to pass their camp, suddenly raised their siege, and returned to Missouri.

President Pierce soon afterwards, pretending to recognise the authority of the invaders' legislature, ordered the army of the United States to assist in enforcing its laws. At the same time large bodies of armed men from South Carolina and other parts of the slave states hastened to the assistance of their friends, the Border ruffians of Missouri, who, under pretence of suppressing a rebellion, plundered and burned settlements of the Free-soilers; and, according to the last accounts, guerrilla bands had possession of all the more settled parts of the territory; the free state men generally being unwilling to oppose to them an organised resistance, lest they should seem to be fighting against the army of the Confederation.

Under these circumstances the usual national party conventions preliminary to the Presidential campaign, which is to terminate at the election in November next, have lately met to arrange their platforms and nominate their candidates.

At the American, or Know-Nothing Convention, which first assembled at Philadelphia, it was found that the delegates were very much more interested in the slavery question than in that of the repeal of the naturalisation laws, which was the avowed purpose of their proposed organisation as a distinct national party. The Southerners present could not be associated in any party, a prominent object of which was not the extension of slavery. They insisted that resolutions expressing submission to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise should be introduced into their platform. Gaining a sufficient number of votes from the north, and being themselves unanimous, they carried their point. A large part of the northern members of the Convention including the whole delegations from most of the northern states, considering this course to have been unjust as well as impolitic, withdrew from the convention, and have since formed a Northern American party, which has also had its convention at New York, adopted a platform, and nominated candidates. The candidate of the slavery Americans is Mr Ex-president, Fillmore; that of the free soil Americans, Mr. Banks, the present Speaker of the House of Representatives. As neither of these gentlemen has the smallest chance of being elected, it is probable that both will decline the nomination; and the votes of their friends will be given for the candidates of the two parties expressly representing the two sides of the slavery question.*

Next assembled the convention of the administration, or democratic party, at Cincinnati. A strong personal objection to Mr. Pierce himself was here exhibited, and the nomination of Mr. Buchanan was made to the succession; but the great act of Mr. Pierce's administration was fully endorsed, and every demand of the slave-holding interest was yielded to in the construction of the platform apparently without hesitation or reserve. Under the circumstances, the long series of resolutions adopted mean that, rather than surrender the administrative control of the country to their opponents, the democratic party will adopt slavery as a national institution, and will sacrifice every other interest to increase its security, profit, and permanence.

It is evident that the leaders of the party felt confident of their ability to carry the state of Pennsylvania, the native state of Mr. Buchanan, from his personal popularity among its citizens, and doubted if they could, by any conciliatory course, succeed anywhere else at the north. Seeing the necessity of securing the undivided vote of the south, they therefore determined to outbid the South American party, and contrived to do so by affirming that slavery could exist, and was entitled to the national protection, wheresoever it was not already forbidden by positive enactments.

Mr. Buchanan though originally opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, has publicly accepted the nomination, and avowed submission to the purposes expressed in the platform of resolutions, and his willingness, in case he should be elected, to be guided in the administration of government by them.

Lastly, the Republican, or Opposition party, has had its convention at Philadelphia, and has nominated Col. Fremont as its candidate for the presidency. Col. Fremont was born in a slave state, but is the son of a non-slaveholder; and is said to have had a bitter private experience of the evils of slavery. It was chiefly owing to his great personal influence that the people of California persistently refused to allow their community to be saddled with slavery, and insisted, against the entreaties and threats of those who wished to have this advantage of their unparalleled labour-market, on entering the Union as a free state or not at all.

The platform of the republican party may be condensed into three sentences. First, they want Congress to rule the territories and to exclude slavery therefrom; second, they want the restoration of the Missouri compromise; third, they want to respect the rights of other nations. On the other hand, the Cincinnati platform takes a different ground: the Democrats want—first, Congress

* Since this was written, Mr. Banks has declined, as I anticipated.

not to meddle with the territories; second, Kansas to be a slave state; third, to acquire more territory suitable for the further extension of slavery without regard to the rights of anyone.

MY LITTLE WARD.

I AM not a rich man now, but ten years ago I was much poorer. Having a small family likely to become a large one, and a small living in the north, which was not likely to become a large one; the difference of fare between the second and third class carriages to London was of some consideration to me; and whenever I had occasion—which was but seldom—to take that journey, I travelled in the latter. We were a very long time, certainly, upon the road—from early morning to quite late into the night; but I seldom found it wearisome. Not only because I am a clergyman do I make it a rule to consider nobody belonging to the Church of England as foreign to me, but it is my natural disposition to take a great interest in all my fellow-creatures of every degree. Without any views of acquiring additional information, of sucking the brains of those who have the misfortune to come across me, as is much recommended by moralists and philosophers of all times, I am in the habit of listening greedily to communicative travellers; of sympathising with their joys or troubles; and of becoming for the time, indeed, rather more wrapped up in them than their own mothers. I have many times, on my different trips, felt as if I could have died for my next neighbour, who may have got in at one station and out at the next. I actually did upon one occasion—not die, but—become answerable to the extent of seventeen shillings and sixpence for a passenger who had lost his railway ticket from Preston: which money, by the bye, he afterwards sent me faithfully, as soon as he could earn it, like a man. The first-class passenger is too reserved, not to say too airified and selfish for me, and the second-class takes his opinions from the first at second-hand; but in the parliamentary train we are all of us perfectly natural and (we at least who have backs to our seats) at our ease, and our sentiments are more original and not seldom better worth having. Our journeys, unless we are in an excursion train, are rarely undertaken for pleasure's sake, and it may be generally predicted, from our personal appearance, upon what errand we have set out. At the larger stations there are scores of us, always very much before our time, each, as it were, a life-picture, displaying his or her biography in very looks.

This labourer, way worn with the dusty roads, who shoulders his heavy bundle, through which a hedge-stick passes—to the last never resting it a moment, but pacing up and down the platform, as though he might be so set onward on his travel—has all his worldly wealth (and little it is) within it. He has walked far and fast, but he does not join the boisterous throng about the Railway Arms; not so much that he has but few pennies to spare, as that his heart has fallen below that point whereat beer has power to cheer it. He is a powerful man, and surely not an idle one; still those two strong arms of his cannot earn bread enough—for whom? For the wife and bairns who will come up presently in the train from a station lower down the line, from which he himself has walked round some twenty miles to save a shilling. A kindly and unselfish heart he has, notwithstanding that knitted brow and those almost sinister eyes. Be careful how you address him, for he is rough and rude; he needs none of your smooth lies, he says, and he has none to give you in return. There is very little of that rose-coloured patriotism about him which we see and read of boasting itself in after-dinner speeches, with three times three and one cheer more. The first-class gentry who are forced to travel for a little way by the parliamentary, regard him suspiciously, and write him down a Chartist in their hearts, and I think it very likely that he is one; but there is no fear of his upsetting the constitution just at present, poor fellow! for he is going far away from England, and most likely for ever; the ship that he will sail by, is but a tale to him, for he has never seen one; the ocean that he will have to traverse is but a dream to him; and of the distant land to which he is bound, and whither, thank God! all that is most dear to him is going likewise, he hardly knows the name.

This maiden with the Saxon hair, so young that she scarce esteems it beautiful, and with the trustful light blue eyes, I trust leaves not her fatherland. That slender purse in her sunburnt fingers, the great marble-coloured box that stands beside her, and that tearful leave-taking of the grey-haired old man, her father, seem indeed to threaten it; but, though his darling daughter, and the comfort of his old age, is leaving him, it is not for so very long; that is what he tells her, or strives to tell her, and what the poor girl tries to look as if she derived consolation from. God grant, prays he (but not aloud), that thy beauty may not prove thy misery! She is going to the mighty city far away, where lovers are many and friends are few, to the new mistress and the strange house.

This mother and her son; they will be together, that is something, at least for this one journey. Her loving eyes, her clasping hand, are making very much of him while he is yet within her gaze and grasp. Tearless eyes and steady hands she has. She comes of a sturdy race, an Englishwoman born and bred; sorrow and she have been far too long acquainted for her to fear him now. By

the delicate white fingers, by the grace about the silvering hair, by the voice so low and musical, she has been nurtured tenderly, and known ease and comfort, if not wealth; but by those well-worn and coarse widow's-weeds, there has been a long divorcement. The boy has everything about him bright and new: the blue jacket and the band of gold round his cap—which he especially delights in—proclaim the middy; and he is going to join his ship for the first time. There will be a little trembling of the lip at the very last, but that will be all. He is his mother's son, and, if I read him aright, he will not fear the wildest of seas nor the fiercest of battles; and what would I not give to see his mother's looks when first she reads his name in the Gazette of victory! What an interest in the boy this climate-hardened soldier seems to take. He has come from revisiting, on furlough, his old home after years of absence, and from gladdening the old couple, his parents, to the core. Content for all their lives to dwell within their native hamlet, without a dream of those alien skies which had so bronzed his cheek, they have drunk in his tales like children listening to fairy lore. Their simple pleasure will be from henceforth to retail to neighbour ears these records of their soldier son. "Just the same, bless ye, just the same as ever," is their George—or, at least, so he seems to them; and, indeed, though his look is somewhat stern, his fringed lips somewhat too tightly barred, he has still a dutiful if not a loving heart. How he is looked up to by his fellow travellers, especially by the female portion of them, and how they will strive to get in the same compartment!

Such characters as these I almost always find among my fellow-travellers by the parliamentary; but in addition, at a small railway-station in the north, in the summer of eighteen hundred and forty-five, as I well remember, I saw for the first time this figure. A somewhat stiff-looking but lady-like girl about the age whereat the "Brook and river meet, womanhood and childhood fleet," who held in one hand a small basket, and in the other a book. She was dressed well, but very plainly, in dove-coloured silk, and seemed in no way disconcerted. As she was amongst the crowd with no one to take care of her, I offered—as the train came slowly up—to see that her luggage was put in; but she held up, first the basket and then the book, and remarked quietly, "I have nothing more, I thank you, sir." She was going to London then, for I had seen her buy her ticket with that doll's fit-out! I managed to obtain for her a corner-seat with back to the engine, and placed myself beside her. The country through which we were then passing was very beautiful; on one side, lay the level cornland with the crops either standing ripe or bound in sheaves, and whilst we cut across the quiet country lanes the loaded waggons waited at the long railway-gates to let us pass; on the other was mostly pasture-land and green valleys, which were shut to the westward with grey hills; but the girl never looked to this or that, or raised her eyes from off the pages open before her; they were not so very entrancing one would have thought to such as she—the Life of Charles the Twelfth (in French) by Monsieur Voltaire. After a while I saw she never turned one leaf over, but used it as a mere pretext for thinking undisturbed. When we had been journeying many hours, and even when we arrived in a large manufacturing town where we were to stop a little, and everybody was getting out for refreshments, I offered to procure her some; but she opened her basket, by way of reply, and took from it a mighty hunch of bread and butter, and consumed that, sitting quietly where she was; it was not in the shape of a sandwich, but just such a wedge as forms the morning-meal in educational establishments, and I said, "Where do you go to school, my dear young lady?" quite naturally. Her perfectly self-controlled and quite grown-up appearance seemed to be greatly disturbed.

"I do not see why I should tell you, sir," said she, colouring.

"Very true," replied I. "I merely wished to become friends with you; but as you will not talk, may I ask you to change books with me, for I perceive you are not greatly interested in that one."

She did so; and I found, as I had expected, in the title-page of her school-volume, her address and name; Miss Jeannette Smith, Miss Mackaveth's, Laburnum Lodge, Carlisle.

"How came you with that foreign accent of yours, Miss Smith?" I asked.

She looked at me for one instant a little tigerishly, but presently began to laugh.

"You are too wise for me," she said, "but I have left school now for good. I am going to my friends in London, they are French people; that is why I talk a little strangely, as you say."

And Miss Jeannette Smith applied herself to the subject of my late studies—Cripps upon Chemical Law, I think it was—with the same enthusiasm that she had bestowed upon the monarch of Sweden.

"Is it customary," said I, returning to the charge, after a while, "for Miss Mackaveth's young ladies to travel in third-class carriages, alone, when they return to their friends?"

"When they are very poor, sir; not unless;" was the answer delivered in a firm tone, and not without a touch of reproach.

This poor child, solitary amidst so many; not exhibiting annoyance at the draughts, tobacco-smoke, and other discomforts of her position; content to bear her lot without

repining, at an age which is but little fitted for carrying its own burthens; and wondering at, almost suspicious of, sympathy, how sad and strange it seemed!

The evening was by this time coming on apace, and the air grew chilly. Thinly clad as she was, she must have been cold enough and weary enough with her long travel. I gave her a spare cloak and shared with her my railway-wrapper, but she seemed to grow paler and paler, and her features to wear a more anxious look as we went on.

"It will be dark by the time we get to town, I fear," I said after a long pause. "How will your friends be able to find you amidst all this crowd?"

Slowly, silently, the large tears began to fall down her thin white cheeks.

"I have no friends in the world," she made answer, in a voice wherein just a little tremble thrilled. "I have run away from school."

Although she had gone so far as to tell me this, she did not seem to have reposed any confidence in me; but rather to have stated an unfortunate fact, which might appear pitiable, and to put her in need of help, or not, according to the nature of the person it was imparted to.

"Well, Jeannette," said I, "my sister, to whose house I am going, will gladly take you in for this night, I am sure; and, to-morrow, we will see what is to be done." She thanked me then, and began to sob a little, but not much. So I took her with me to my sister's, and the next morning, after breakfast, she told us her little history; how that she had never known her parents, but had remained from early childhood at her late school; that, at first Miss Mackaveth had been kind to her, and the girls also, and that she had ever been made much of; but that, lately, there had been a difference; she could not say she was ill-treated, but rather was not considered, and was looked down upon. She taught the smaller girls now, as monitress, French and music; she was a good musician—excellent—would we like to hear her? She sat down at the piano and executed two difficult pieces with great spirit; and, on being shown a quite new melody, played it off very creditably at sight. It was with an intention of becoming a teacher of music that she had thus come up to London by herself. The family of a young lady, a school-friend of hers in the old times, would have received her at first, doubtless; they were not aware of her coming; they were great people, and lived in the Edgeware Road, but she did not know the number of their house; she had been led to understand that that position was the best—the most fashionable—in London. If nothing could be done in London; if she was indeed too young for an instructress; if the Edgeware Road was really only a third-rate locality; if the clergyman who had been kind to her was going to the north again in a few days, and if he would take her; she supposed she had better go back again. She would much prefer his accompanying her to Laburnum Lodge, but was not afraid of her school-mistress, nevertheless. In the meantime I wrote to that lady to assure her of Miss Jeannette's safety, and arrived within the week with the young truant herself at Carlisle.

Miss Mackaveth seemed unfeignedly glad to see her little charge again. "I have a true regard for her," said she, in the course of a long conversation I held with her in private, "and feel myself especially answerable for her well-being. Eleven years ago she was left, a very little child, in my trust, and under very peculiar circumstances. A Frenchwoman, a most respectable middle-aged person, declaring herself to be the confidential servant of an English family residing abroad, brought her hither, with instructions from her parents, regarding her education. A large sum of money, in French notes, was left with her: enough even to defray all expenses incurred up to the last few months. I received letters from time to time, purporting to come from Mrs. Smith, Jeannette's mother, a French lady, but in reality written (as I believe) by the servant whom I had seen. These letters grew fewer, and then altogether ceased. When the money left with me was expended, I wrote again and again to Mrs. Smith in Paris, but I received no answer. Upon personal inquiry, which I caused to be made at her address, I learned that no such person had ever lived there, but that some one of that name had purchased, as is not uncommon, the right of receiving letters at the house. She had not been there, however, for a considerable time, and half-a-dozen of my communications were then lying there unopened. Feeling pretty sure that the child was really deserted, and not being able to afford to keep Jeannette in idleness, I set her to assist us in tuition. I hope my conduct was not altered towards her in consequence of that: I hope my sisters, who carry on this establishment with me, made no difference in theirs. For the young ladies I cannot answer. I have had a considerable experience, and I am afraid that girls are ungenerous in these respects. I never heard them; but I think it quite possible that some of them, when provoked, may have called her foundling or charity girl. If Jeannette told you so, I should say they certainly did; for she is very truthful. As I have said, sir, we have a sincere regard for her on many accounts; but not a warm affection. Without paying over-attention to what her young companions have said of her, I think her too reserved, uncheerful, and secretive, to be ever popular. (Poor little Jeannette, thought I, how hard for such as you to win your way, without a weapon, to our steel-clad human hearts!) I was above measure surprised and annoyed at her running away from us;

I have forgiven her; it shall certainly not influence our future conduct towards her, except to make us endeavour to remove the —the unhappiness, if you will—that caused it.

Miss Mackaveth concluded by again thanking me very warmly for my conduct towards her pupil, and promised to let me hear about her from time to time. Little Jeannette's adieu to me was of a tenderer kind than I had expected. I left with her my direction, which was then at a country vicarage not very far from Carlisle, and begged her to write, and even to come to us, if in any real trouble. My wife and the girls, I well knew, would welcome her in her affliction, as though she were a daughter or a sister of their own. She was bathed in tears, and called me "father, dear darling father," in the French tongue, as her custom was when excited, repeatedly. Poor child! She was considered reserved and secretive; but I fear there was but little at Laburnum Lodge to elicit much demonstration of affection.

Not very long after this circumstance, I was translated, unexpectedly, to a London benefice of considerable station and emolument. A distant cousin of my wife, Lord Bactsares, was the first who wrote to tell us of this good fortune; and she has ever since, from a pardonable vanity, ascribed it to the fact of their relationship; whereas it is, without doubt, owing to the bishop's approbation of my work on Christian Ethics (Withnocaws, Hopeful, & Co., Oxford), published in eighteen hundred and thirty, and triumphantly disproves the idea of merit in the church going unrewarded. It—the preferment, not the Ethics—made rather a noise in our country neighbourhood; and among many pleasant letters of congratulation, the pleasantest to my mind was one from the little friendless orphan of Carlisle. She had refused our invitation to spend the last midsummer holidays with us at Scawdale, because, I verily believe, she knew we could scarcely afford to have visitors there; but, upon our accession to comparative affluence, my wife wrote, at my desire, the next year, to ask her up to town; and up little Jeannette came.

She had grown into a most distinguished-looking young woman, and had certainly taken every advantage of the accomplishments imparted by the Misses Mackaveth. She was conversant with all the modern languages, of which French, indeed, seemed to be her natural dialect more than ever. She sketched, she painted, she fabricated old oak frames out of what appeared to be shoe-leather, and very ancient china out of chintz and physic-bottles. She wore—and I am sure this was an art—little artificial whiskers to stick her hair out with, so dexterously, that, instead of poking themselves out officiously, like the stuffing of a lodging-house sofa, they positively improved her appearance. She played—ah, how little Jeannette did play!—upon the harp, the organ, and the piano-forte. I have seen her sweep the keys of this last instrument so skilfully, and build up towering passion, and haughtiness, and imperial splendour extemporaneously, in such a manner as to draw forth the admiration of an entire company. That coldness and secretiveness of which her mistress spoke was certainly not to be discovered now, if it had ever existed. Of herself and her condition she would converse most freely, and it was a delight to her to excite the praise and wonder of others; because, as she said, of the pleasure that she knew it gave to us. Our parties—for we now had pretty frequent parties—would not have been half so attractive, it was owned, without her presence; and even my church obtained in her an organist such as scarcely any money could have procured. Before the end of her six weeks' vacation, it was arranged between the Mackaveths and ourselves that Miss Jeannette should not return to Carlisle.

At this time, there occurred the first symptom in my ward of a characteristic which was afterwards magnified into ingratitude and want of heart. She refused to write a single line to her late mistress. "I cannot say I am sorry to leave her; I cannot thank her for kindnesses I have never received," said she. The poor girl's regard for truth was excessive, and her sense of neglect keen. I had also, by the bye, a letter from Miss Mackaveth in exchange for mine, written, as I fear, with a design to prejudice me against Jeannette; though couched in expressions favourable to myself, and under the pretence of a friendly warning. Having burnt this (and I hope forgotten it) almost immediately after its perusal, I remember nothing distinctly; but, as so many have since set themselves (most unjustly) against my ward, I don't wish them to have it to say that I have concealed anything whatever, that may seem to tell against her in this account. If there had been any difference heretofore between our treatment of her and of our own daughters, there was certainly none from this time forth. As we had an endearing name for Hester and for Gertrude, so sister Jeannette was called Jenny by us all, for love and shortness. She was introduced to our old friends by the same title to put her at once upon a familiar footing. Her birthday we could not keep, because we didn't know it; but we kept the day whereon I first met her in the train, instead. If she dressed better than my real daughters it must have been owing to her superior taste, for she had the same allowance. Thus little Jeannette lived with us for years.

Among the friends who were accustomed to visit us pretty constantly, was a certain young barrister of the name of Hartley;

he was the heir presumptive to Lord Bactsares, who was an old bachelor, but Hartley had no great fortune except in that expectation. He grew very intimate at the house; and, on one occasion, ourselves and the three girls went to a tasteful breakfast which he gave in his Temple rooms. They were very high up, and on a most forbidding-looking staircase; but, the view from the windows was as beautiful as is to be seen in London. The pleasant gardens flanked by the quaint old buildings; the broad, swift-flowing river, here spanned by massive arches, here lightly cleared by the suspension bridge; the long, sharp-pointed steamers flitting upon its waters like huge dragon-flies; the slow unwieldy barge drifting diagonally across the stream; beyond, and opposite the dark house of commerce, with their crowded wharves and Babel chimneys, and a looming smoke-cloud, as of thunder, over all. I was wrapped up in the observation of these things, perhaps, too much to observe what was going on within the room; for, my wife, when we got home, asked my opinion upon "that affair between Hartley and our Gertrude,"—as though it had been delicately and discreetly mentioned in the Morning Post as being already on the tapis—to my intense astonishment. There was no objection to such an alliance; but, I recommended a little more observation, and suffering things to take their own course before our moving in the matter, and she acquiesced in that opinion. About a month afterwards, during which period I certainly remarked that Mr. Hartley's visits became very frequent, my wife spoke to me again after a quite different fashion.

"I think Jeannette has behaved most basely," said she.

"Good gracious! Impossible! What can you mean, my dear?"

"Look here! What do you think of this?" cried she. "I caught her showing it to him in the conservatory, and heard him thanking her for the pleasure which it afforded him in proving——but there, judge for yourself." And she put into my hands an exquisite water-colour painting of the very view that had so charmed me from the Temple windows. It was Jenny's treatment and composition all over, I saw at a glance.

"And a most beautiful sketch, and well worth anybody's thanks it is," answered I, with unfeigned admiration.

"His thanks 'for the interest in him betrayed on the part of the painter,' mind you," replied my wife, raising her voice somewhat higher than the occasion—I was quite close beside her—seemed to demand. "Are you blind? Are you deaf? Are you dumb?" she added, as I sat speechless with astonishment at her unaccustomed vehemency, "that you have nothing to say against this traitress, who has stolen from your daughter the affections of her engaged lover?"

"Stop a little, my love," I urged, quietly, "I have never heard that Gertrude was engaged."

"Not actually, in so many words, but virtually. Everybody was aware of it long ago, except yourself."

"Should I then," replied I, very gravely, "be the last to know of such a thing as this, my dear wife?" And the good kind-hearted creature—who is the best of women at the core, although a little impetuous and hasty at times in her conclusions—embraced me tenderly as though she had committed quite a crime. "But you are so unsuspicious and confiding, my dearest husband," she said (and indeed it was always a superstition of hers to believe me the most imposed upon and victimised of men) "that you don't perceive how ungratefully you are being treated."

That same evening Gertrude herself poured her sorrow into my ears; her sorrow, but not her anger: she confessed that she had long entertained for Hartley a more than kindly feeling, which he had seemed to her to reciprocate warmly; that this sentiment had arisen before Jeannette's coming, and continued for some time after it; but that of late it had become plain to her, in spite of her endeavours to disbelieve it, that the affections of the young man were being withdrawn from her; that they had been attracted to Jeannette Smith—that is, Jenny—instead, and that with her they now remained. She would not say that artifices had been used to deprive her of them; the superior accomplishments and more striking manners of her adopted sister were cause enough, she knew. Jeannette (I wish she had said Jenny) was still dear to her, but she (Gertrude) would, if I pleased, prefer to reside with her aunt in a neighbouring part of town until the marriage took place, to remaining under the same roof with my ward. Without a touch of malice, with only the shadow of natural mortification, she asked this favour, and I accorded it at once. I was perfectly sure that her generous statement was the true one: that, unknown to herself, my Ward had fascinated the young man from his allegiance; and that perhaps he had never meant quite so much as Gertrude in her own love had given him credit for.

Jenny herself, with many tears and the sincerest sorrow, declared that Mr. Hartley's attentions had distressed her more than they had pleased her; that she had had in truth a very great esteem for him, but out of respect to my daughter's feelings, had striven to conceal it. "For, what love," cried she, "O my dear father, could repay me for making you or yours unhappy, even for a day!" Perceiving soon, she continued, that Gertrude had in truth mistaken a polite and kindly acquaintance for a lover, she had conducted herself more naturally; that the young barrister's intentions had on this declared themselves undis-

guisedly, and had been brought to the point of an offer of marriage by the discovery of the picture, as narrated by my wife; that she had accepted him provisionally, and on the condition that I should be satisfied with her conduct in the whole matter, and gave an unhesitating consent, "without which," she concluded in the French tongue, "I cannot expect, dear father, in anything to prosper."

I was very much affected by these scenes, as may be imagined, and arranged for the interview on the next day with Mr. Hartley. I explained to him the exact condition in which Jenny was placed; how it was unknown to us whether she was of high or humble origin, or even legitimate or illegitimate; but that, having first adopted her and taken her from her former protectress, and afterwards brought her up in all respects as my own child, I considered myself bound to give her the same dowry—not a large one—as if she were so. He thanked me warmly, as though he had expected nothing of this sort, and indeed his love for Jenny was very strong, and quite disinterested, I am sure. The day for their marriage was not fixed, but it was understood that it should take place soon.

Some weeks after this time, on the fourteenth of May—as I remember well, for it happened to be the day on which we received marriage cards from my wife's relative Lord Bactsares; and my wife, Hesther, and myself, had been to visit Gertrude at my sister Annie's house (who had, I regret to say, taken such a dislike to Jenny by this time, as to beg she might not be brought within her doors). On our return I found my Ward wishing to speak with me. "My dear father," said she when we were alone together in my study, "See here!" she took from her pocket a case of tiny jewels, necklace, brooch, and armlets, of exquisite workmanship, and comprising almost every precious stone in harmonious combination. "These were mine," she continued, "when I was almost an infant;" the tears came into her eyes, and a flush crossed her cheeks while she regarded the still dimly remembered trinkets. "They were left for me by a little boy, months ago, at your door, without any sort of explanation; I did not know whether to tell you or not. I feared lest it might be some cruel hoax, but to-day he came again with these few papers." (I found afterwards that Jenny unintentionally miss-dated this, as the papers were left on the previous afternoon it seems.) They were documents in the French language, setting forth the whole particulars of Jenny's previous history, and affording ample proof of her birth.

She was the only child of noble and wealthy parents in the south of France; the count and countess Delamotte; proud, insolent, bitter-hearted—so it was written—yet loved their daughter to distraction. They treated their servants (very unusual with French people) as though they were slaves, animals, dirt beneath their feet. Jeannette Lotteau was the nurse: Jeannette whose name their child has borne all its life long, was once struck, beaten upon the cheek, by madame in her passion. The scar was not great, but it has taken twenty years to heal: now, however, that the countess was in London (an extract from a newspaper was here given, announcing the arrival at a certain fashionable hotel of the count and countess Delamotte) let her at last discover her lost one, late teacher at a Pension, now a dependent in the house of a heretic priest; it would be good for her.

Jenny begged me to say nothing of this till I was certain of the truth of the whole affair; but, for my own part, I felt pretty sure upon the point; and, when I took my way with my adopted child on the next morning to the hotel, it was with intense curiosity to look upon her real parents. I left dear Jenny, palpitating, in a room downstairs, while I went up to the apartment occupied by the count and countess. It was one of the finest in that gorgeous mansion, a large drawing-room, magnificently furnished; at one end of it, upon an ottoman, lounged a gentleman with a newspaper; and, at the other end, in an arm-chair reclined madame. It was late in the spring-time, but a brisk fire was burning in the grate, and she seemed to have every need of it. She did not rise at my entrance, and her husband only lifted his head up languidly, and demanded, in a voice strangely at variance with his words, "To what happy chance he was thus deeply indebted for the honour of my presence?" I don't know whether he was practising the superpoliteness of his countrymen, or whether he was sneering.

"I come," answered I, in such French as I could command, "not without reason, sir. It is possible that I may have been misinformed, and be mistaken; but, I think that I bring some intelligence which will affect you both, very, very deeply."

A little lifting of the lady's pencilled eyebrows, a scarcely perceptible shrug of the count's shoulders were the only replies.

"You had a servant once called Jeannette Lotteau, had you not?"

A sharp inarticulate cry of rage burst from the count, the lady rose swiftly from her seat, and stood before me in an instant, white but without trembling—so like, so like my ward!

"And my child, sir, what of her? Name of Heaven, speak!"

"She has been with me, madame, for years as my adopted daughter. She is well; she is even now under this very roof!"

That was in substance the whole of what passed between us. I left the two, at once, alone with their new-found offspring. I returned home and told my family all that

had occurred—for the first time. I knew that my dear little Jenny must sooner or later be taken from us for ever, and it made me sad. With those proud artificial parents of hers—although it was plain they loved her—I doubted if she would be so happy as beneath our roof. I thought of Hartley, too, and how his union with my ward would now perhaps meet with obstacles. He seemed, poor fellow, to expect as much himself, but he did not dwell upon it, perceiving I had so great a sorrow of my own. Everybody, I think, saw that; and, then and since, all have forborne to give me any unnecessary pain—I feel it, and I thank them. Words have dropped involuntarily sometimes from those most dear to me, of anger and uncharity against my little Jenny. They did not know her as I knew her, or they would feel how deeply they have therein wronged her. The girls are very hard upon her that she has not taken notice of young Hartley since, (we are all at home together again, and this is the only subject that we disagree upon); but how can we tell to what harsh discipline she may be subjected; how this and that, which seems to us quite right and natural, may have been forbidden by her high-born foreign parents!

It does seem sad and strange never to have seen dear Jenny more; not once to have kissed my little Ward again, and wished her God speed on her new and lofty way. I read that the three went back to Paris on the ensuing day to that wherein I saw them last; this time how many, many years! I read some few months back, that the Count Delamotte was made a minister of the Emperor. That is all I know. We are very happy at home, thank heaven,—all of us; but I should like this strange neglect to be explained to satisfy others; and how I still miss, and how I long to see, My little Ward!

PLURALITY OF MITES.

I FELL asleep the other evening after dinner. I had been dining alone, and the more serious business of meat and pudding having been disposed of, I had sat for some time idly playing with the cheese, some loose dry crumbly bits of which were lying about my plate. I fell asleep and had a dream.

I dreamt that in some strange unexplained manner (when was ever anything explained in dreams?) my eyes became all at once endowed with microscopic power, and happening to light upon a crumb of cheese, beheld a goodly colony of mites. I watched their movements. As I looked, they seemed to increase in size, until I could distinctly single out individuals from the mass. I saw them striving and struggling with each other, some of the weaker getting most cruelly trampled under foot by others who marched over them; I saw them toiling with difficulty up the caseous mountains, or resting quietly in the deep shady valleys into which the inequalities on the surface of the cheese were magnified. I saw some of the larger plumper-looking mites hoarding up heaps of the rich matter that formed at once their food and dwelling-place; and I saw other leaner ones who, dig as deeply as they would into its substance, never seemed able to get food enough to eat.

Then, as I looked, I thought I heard a sound, like voices in the distance, and, by degrees, my ears partaking of the supernatural powers already enjoyed by my eyes, I caught their accents, found that I could understand the language of the mites.

"What a brave world is this of ours!" cried an old fat mite whom I was watching (he spoke louder than the others, and so his were the first words that I caught). "How bountiful has nature been in placing us upon it! Here, have we all we want—our food provided for us, and to be had simply for the picking up. Had we been cast upon the dreary void that separates us from the nearest world to this, we must have died from hunger. Look over yonder: what now appears to you a tiny spot in the distance, once formed portion of this world of ours. Now, it is millions of our longest measure from us."

On hearing this, I could not for the life of me refrain from laughing, asleep though I was. The distant object that he pointed out was one of the crumbs of cheese that I had scattered with my knife some half an hour before; the dreary void that intervened was about two inches of the plate which chanced to be uncovered.

I listened again. The old mite was discoursing learnedly about the atoms that made up their universe. "Look where we will," he said, "we find on every side, far, immeasurably far from us, small specks to all appearance, but supposed to be in reality worlds like our own. It has been said, indeed, that they possess inhabitants like ours; but that we cannot know. Convulsions do occur sometimes that bring two worlds together; but, when this happens, those residing near the spot where the phenomenon occurs seldom survive the shock. Whole nations have been sometimes known to perish in the collision: some being crushed to death, and others thrown far from any habitable spot by the concussion."

Then came a mite, apparently much older than he who had already spoken, and declared he knew of his own knowledge, that the worlds around must, to a great extent, resemble this. Long, long ago, he recollected that the whole formed one enormous mass, vast beyond all conception; that by degrees, with fearful shocks, the worlds they saw in the far distance were, one by one, detached and flew off into space. He was too young when these disruptions happened, to know much about it; but, he had pondered on it

since, and felt convinced that all existing matter, their own world, and the thousands that they saw around them, once formed one mighty whole!

A derisive shout of laughter followed this assertion. The thing was too preposterous to be believed. The younger mites, especially, were boisterous in their incredulity. They were not going to be taken in by tales like that—they knew better. There was no other world besides their own. The bit of cheese they dwelt on was the only bit of cheese that ever was or would, or could, be habitable. See what a size it was. No mite could walk round it in a life-time. If what they had been told was true, how insignificant would this great world of theirs become, compared to the enormous whole! How utterly insignificant the individual mite! No, no, there was no other habitable cheese.

The old mite shook his head, and spoke not. For my own part, I felt half tempted to convince the sceptics of their error by scraping all the crumbs together in my plate, and thus, once more uniting their scattered universe. But I had heard of the disasters that ensued whenever these convulsions, as they called them, did occur; and, having by this time conceived an interest in the tiny disputants, I spared them and continued listening.

"Come, now," exclaimed one of the incredulous young mites, with an air of one about to put a poser, "if you have told us true, and everything we see around us is cheese like this we live in; if there really exists as much cheese as would make a thousand of our worlds; why may there not be even a thousand times as much as that again? Why may there not be cheese enough in being, to form a million, million worlds,—all fit for mites, like us, to live on, eh?"

"Why not, indeed!" the sage replied. "For my part I believe there is."

"Ho! ho! ho! ho!" There was not one mite in the whole community that didn't fairly shake its tiny sides with laughter at this wild assertion. They all declared the old mite must be in his dotage. They kicked and cuffed him cruelly, and even threatened to expel him from the cheese he stood on, and so compel him to find out the truth of his own theory by endeavouring to make a pilgrimage to one of the distant worlds he spoke of.

Then, other mites came up to join in the discussion. There was one who had been a great traveller (how proud the little fellow was of his experience! he had been nearly half-way round the crumb of cheese they all resided on). He astonished his hearers by declaring that, in spots that he had visited, there were objects visible in the distance utterly unlike the little specks they saw from where they stood. One in particular was more than fifty times as big as any they could see; but, even this was nothing when compared with the great world they lived in.

(Mistaken mite! The object that you saw was the distant lump from which all your pigmy worlds were shaken!)

As to there being other bits of cheese inhabited besides their own, the traveller would not hear of it. It was true that there were other mites dwelling in distant portions of their world whose manners differed in several ways from their own. (His audience seemed surprised to hear that even this could be; but he had seen them, so there was no disputing it.) But as for other worlds of mites, the thing was too preposterous!

Then came another—a mite of most imposing aspect, and attended by a long train of followers. I soon found out he was the monarch of the colony I was observing. With royal condescension, the sovereign mite paused to inquire into the subject of discussion. On being told, his majesty grew wroth, and vowed it was high treason to suppose there could be any other communities to govern than the well-known and established nations of their world. It was an insult to the dignity of the few favoured mites who divided the sovereign sway among them, to think that there were others who in their own spheres might be no less potent (or even more potent—which was a horrible and blasphemous thought!) than themselves. So, the poor mite who broached the theory about other worlds was ordered to recant on pain of death; and the fact was established unmistakeably, by royal edict, that there was no cheese—could be no cheese—inhabited, but theirs.

Then I awoke, roused from my after-dinner dream by an Italian boy, beneath my window, grinding on his organ Home, sweet home. It chimed in well with what I had been dreaming of. No place like home! No people like ourselves, no country but our own, no worlds but the globe we live on. No cheese that mites can dwell in, but our own particular crumb!

Yet cheese—and mitey cheese—is sold by tons! Yet suns and systems roll around us; the planet we inhabit, but one atom in a mighty group; that, in its turn, an atom in another mightier one. Where shall we stop? Clusters of satellites revolving around a world: clusters of worlds revolving around a sun: clusters of suns revolving around—what?

Take physic, pomp! Pride, get thee hence! How little any of us, men or mites, can comprehend what may exist beyond the limits of our one especial crumb—whether of earth, or cheese!

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"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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USHERS.

It seems to me—who have passed a very long and varied school-life—that there is no such pitiable class in a civilized community as that of ushers, and at the same time none so mysterious. No man is born an usher; no man achieves (if he can help it) ushership. Ushership is always thrust upon him. Born an usher! What offence could father or mother have committed, to have it visited so roughly upon their innocent? Could its cheeks have ever been chubby, and dimpled into smiles? Had it ever at any time a will of its own? Could the boy as he grew up have ever laughed out honestly among his fellows? enjoyed himself in the playground like the rest? Could he have shirked impositions, broken bounds, and hated and despised *his* ushers? Could he ever have had holidays, —gone home? Heaven knows! but, from what I have seen of him since he became a man, I scarcely think it.

Alone, and amidst a crowd of enemies; in authority, and without the shadow of power; learned, and doomed to pace to and fro upon the low roads to learning; a master and a servant, a gentleman and an usher,—I pity him from the bottom of my heart. Sleek clergy of public schools with lucrative boarders in your own houses, and gratuitous monitors to save you from all carking cares, it is not you I mean. Nor you, high wranglers, who have only just missed your fellowships, and are sub-wardens or vice-principals in some well-endowed grammar-school until your brilliant testimonials and optime discessits shall have dazzled a committee of aldermen, and procured you a better thing. Nor you, trebly refined gentlemen, whose mission it is to educate, under their ancestral roofs, our future hereditary legislators; or to be offered the comforts of a home for a mere three hundred a year, and another hundred added in case you keep a horse. No! I mean the native resident who teaches German, French, and the sword exercise, at Minerva House; and whose services—with washing, parental care, and religious training, inclusive—are to be procured by scions of the nobility and gentry for two-and-twenty guineas per annum, and a silver fork and spoon: I mean the intelligent assistant by whom every branch of mathematical study is imparted: I mean the gentleman from the university, to whom the junior classical department is entrusted: I mean the under-master in general, who partakes of the task of expanding youth with the Reverend the Principal, or with Maunder Crichton Mivins, Esquire, Licentiate of the College of Preceptors, D.C.L., F.S.A., and half the alphabet besides.

The usher I was first acquainted with, I remember but dimly; and yet he impressed my infant mind with the utter hopelessness of ushership, more than any other usher did afterwards. Of all ushers I think he must have been the most miserable: his case—his outward visible framework—appeared to be that of Peter Schlemil reversed; there was the shadow of him, but there was no Peter; a gaunt, wan, hungry-looking, transparent man, speaking under his breath, flitting about without a sound, and serving, like an obedient spirit, his stern master, Habbakuk Straithare, who must have bound him unto him by some unhallowed spell. I went to Habbakuk's (who was a dissenting minister in our town) as a day-boarder, and the shadow —because he was so noiseless and inoffensive, perhaps — seemed to me to be kind and friendly. Straithare had a habit of drumming upon his desk (when he was not drumming upon us) with the end of his cane, after the manner of a crazy auctioneer; of roaring Silence, when you might have heard a pin drop, and there was not the least occasion; of singling out during extemporaneous prayers the very quietest boy, and treating him in a spiritually anatomical way, to the last degree distressing to the subject,—and none of these things did the shadow do or dream of doing. Therefore I got my governor to ask him home occasionally; and, since I was to have a tutor during the vacation, I chose him. Upon the first morning of his breakfasting with us, there was a piece of cold bacon on table, which was almost gone as far as slices went, but had a basis of rusty meat at the bottom, into which nobody had cared to cut down into; I remember, quite distinctly, the shadow carving this objectionable stratum completely off, and consuming it with apparent relish; which gave me a terrible notion of the way

in which he must have been accustomed to put up with what nobody else had any fancy for. He had a flute, from which he was accustomed to distil the most melancholy sounds during the play-times; and this was his only joy. The boys filled it with dirt periodically, and at last broke it. He had low shoes with patches on them, and an umbrella worn down to the nib; so the boys called him Snobby. Habbakuk, who was a very severe master, used rather to encourage the young gentlemen in these respects. The hideous pleasure of inflicting pain upon unoffending and defenceless objects did not seem to be considered cowardly, immoral, or unchristian; but the restraint of it, on the contrary, as milksoppy, nonsensical, and (settler of all controversy!) un-English. The indolence of the preceptor is backed by the heartlessness and folly of those who entrust their children to him. They forget the sufferings of their own school-time, and don't care if they remember them. Certainly there is no social question so entrenched by stupidity or prejudice, on which the advocates of improvement have such difficulty in getting a hearing, as the moral training of boys: "Beat the nonsense out of them;" "Let them rough it a little;" "Let them find their own level;" "Nothing like a little wholesome bullying;" "Boys will be boys," are thrown from all sides at the educational reformer, just as rotten eggs and extinct cats are cast by way of argument at political reformers. It suits, somehow, old gentlemen in affluent circumstances to extol their school days; while they are solacing themselves for enforced abstinence from port with the choicest Lafitte, to bewail the time when they took their half-dozen of ginger-beer with impunity; and, while they leave three-parts of their pine-apple as being hard and near the rind, to lament the epoch when gooseberries seemed the best of fruit. Fluffkins, who is a country gentleman of large fortune and excellent appetite, is accustomed to get quite pathetic (after dinner) upon the bygone times when he had threepence a-week for pocket-money and the refuse of the bigger boys' meals for food. When he becomes a little stertorous in his breathing, and has a handkerchief cast over his purple face and protruding eyes, he will hold forth in gasps about the healthy moderation which he learned at school, and has never, thank Heaven, forgotten. "Lessons of temperance are taught by what you call hardships, sir—of temperance and of iron endurance;" and, before I can reply, he is fast asleep, trumpeting like an elephant; having been utterly exhausted in riding over his farm and reading the newspaper. Fluffkins is my friend; and I may therefore be permitted to state that he is at once the most fawning and the most imperious of men: his fat face crinkles all over into smiles when my lord comes over once or twice a-year, from the Park, to dine at the Grange; at whose approach, champagne and johannisberg foam up, as though he were Bacchus himself (he looks much more like Silenus); and Mrs. F. puts on her diamonds. Now I, who have been a friend of the house for forty years, am regaled with what Fluffkins calls "a very drinkable port;" and it is understood that I had much better not be contradictory. "Nothing," says F., "is like an English school for getting all the airs knocked out of a fellow; and for independence in after-life, sir." And he believes with all his soul that he is a proof of the effects of it. With general statements of this sort he is armed at all points; but, if I give him rope enough, he will tell me anecdotes, with a sort of horrid joy, of how he got hold of "a little bit of a boy, who had just come from his mother's apron-strings, and whom (Ha, ha, ha!) I gave a deuce of a thrashing to for being so small; and Bullneck, and Hulker, and myself, we buried him in a dungheap, up to the neck, sir, and poured water upon him for a couple of hours, to make him grow, (Ha, ha, ha!) and he did grow in consequence, sir, devilishly." It was Fluffkins, be sure, who stuffed the poor Shadow's flute with mud, and led the laugh against those clothes which were the best he could afford to wear. I cannot tell for certain, but I think if I had been the Shadow, I would have expended most of my remaining vital power in the personal chastisement of Master F., and would then have flitted away from the school-world and its Habbakuks altogether.

Messrs. Midas and Janty, assistant-masters at my first preparatory academy for the public schools, were a different variety of the same genus. They were the faithful slaves, indeed, of the Reverend Sloe Dumplin, but they served him under protest. Whenever a boy was unlawfully or excessively punished Midas prefaced it with—"Doctor Dumplin has requested me to set you an imposition of two thousand lines, I regret to say;" or, "I am about to perform the painful duty of locking you up in the dark closet for fourteen hours, at the instance of Doctor Dumplin." Mr. Midas was inflexible with the doctor upon the matter of disputed passages, and would not submit, either privately or in public, to have his classical learning underrated. From his stubbornness in this respect, and from his general good temper, he was called the Ox. Upon one occasion, after having argued during school-time with the head master, upon the Platonic Dialogues, I heard him whisper to Janty that Dumplin had been evidently studying the English version, which was forbidden—it seemed for very sufficient reasons—to us boys. "Ah!" answered Janty, rubbing his hair until it stood upright, three inches high, "the Ox knoweth his master's crib." Mr. J. exhibited his independence by the perfection of his polite phrases and de-

meanour. "I hope, sir, that you have enjoyed a refreshing sleep," was the sort of salutation which he returned to the blunt "Good morning" of his superior. The way in which he took off his hat to Mrs. Dumplin and those three princesses, her offspring, was the happiest mixture of George the Fourth and Sir Charles Grandison, that a polished mind can conceive. On those few festive occasions, when the great gulf between Pedagogue and Usher was temporarily bridged over, and all sat down together before a cold collation—after some experiments in the doctor's lecture-room, in electricity and chemistry, calculated to exhilarate us to the utmost limit—Janty's general carriage and gracefulness in assisting the ladies to chicken and sherry, was considered unimpeachable. His best waistcoat (which I remember, poor fellow, to have been the same for a long course of years) retained to the last a brilliancy, of which words can give but a feeble idea; it represented, by sprigs and threads formed of the precious metals, upon a satin ground, the firmament—sun, moon, and stars competing upon it together with an equal fervency; and this celestial waistcoat was Mr. Janty's pride. One of the few ushers whom I ever saw assert his personal dignity was this gentleman, on the occasion of an insult being offered to his favourite garment. A boy of the name of Jones pointed out this miracle of art, one Sunday, with his finger to the rest of us, as not being altogether the sort of pattern that is worn for morning costume; and Mr. Janty knocked him down with a box upon his right ear; picking him up with a box upon his left immediately, observing, that he hoped he (Mr. Janty) knew how to dress himself like a gentleman.

Kind-hearted pleasant fellows both he and Midas were! and they had a great mutual attachment (a rare event among dependants of any kind, and especially among ushers, who step into one another's shoes, and have to keep in favour with a common master); but they both broke down, I am sorry to say, under pressure, and sacrificed truth and justice at the Dumplin shrine. That cheap expedient for dispensing with many assistant masters, which is called the monitorial system, prevailed at Doctor D.'s, and a little boy of eight years old had, on one occasion, been beaten with a toasting-fork by a monitor of seventeen, for not browning his bread sufficiently; so that his little back was striped like a zebra's, and his jacket cut to rags. Moreover, a small bone of his right arm was broken. With the left, however, he managed to indite an epistle home, setting forth the circumstances. Whether he was too small to be made a man of in that particular manner, and to feel a becoming pride in being punished unjustly, as Fluffkins may opine,—or too young "to look upon all chastisement whatever, inflicted under school authority, as justifiable and beneficial," as some great educationalists of the present day may believe,—I do not venture to determine; certain it is, that he wrote complainingly; and, amongst other things in his simple, tear-blotted, round-text, he said, "I am very miserable, dear father, and have been crying for pain, through the entire school-time"—meaning, from ten o'clock to one. His father arrived in a few hours after the receipt of this; and there was a row. There was the cut jacket and the zebra back, eloquent enough; but all the witnesses were subpœnaed upon the other side; and, as it was desirable to prove the little boy to be a liar, it was arranged that the case should rest upon that statement of his about his tears.

The monitor, the victim, and the two ushers, had been sent for into the drawing-room; and presently (to my intense discomfort) I was summoned also. The father had expressed a wish to see the boy who had sat next to his son during the particular school-time. The father, a fine military-looking man, not having at all the appearance of one who would desire his son to be brought up a milksop, was standing by the door, with his little boy's hand clasped in his own; opposite, stood the young monitor, shifting his legs and frowning, disconcerted and malevolent; next to him, Messrs. Midas and Janty—the former very grave and deferential, the latter with an airy politeness about him, as though he should say, "There is a strange gentleman in the room, and it shall be my province to set him thoroughly at his ease." The doctor alone was seated; he had taken an arm-chair, as if he had nothing to do with the matter except judicially, and was endeavouring to represent, by the expression of his countenance, the union of justice and mercy.

"With regard, sir," he was observing as I entered, "to Walpole minor (for we have another Walpole here, Colonel, of the great Northumberland family: Wynkyn de Walpole we are familiar with so early as Doomsday Book); with regard to the question of his having cried the entire school-time (if I am incorrect in the exact words, pray set me right), it is a mere matter of evidence, and I fear there must have been some gross exaggeration. From my seat in the place appropriated for general study, I survey the whole school, and there was no boy crying, certainly—stay, let me be accurate—yes, there was one boy. Strafford (son of Sir Dudley Strafford, of the west country, Colonel) was in tears from an honourable feeling of incapacity with regard to the meaning of a chapter in Tacitus. Mr. Midas, you remember our scholarly argument upon that subject, wherein I fear you obtained a slight advantage? and, by the bye, sir, you must know that Walpole minor was not crying."

"Sir," replied the usher, "I was in another part of the schoolroom from that in which

the young gentleman was placed, (O, Midas! Midas!) and therefore was not in a position to hear him."

"And I," observed Mr. Janty, with a bow, "happened to have my back towards him,—inadvertently, however, believe me—and therefore was not in a position to see him."

I knew that both these two gentlemen were telling lies, and it devolved upon me—to whom the colonel turned somewhat impatiently—to contradict their evidence. Walpole had been crying all school-time, as most boys of eight years with the small bone of their right arm broken, would probably do; and I said so.

"This is, as you remarked, Doctor Dumplin," said the colonel, when I had finished, "a mere matter of evidence. There has been a falsehood told, most certainly, either by yourself and your ushers on the one hand, or by my boy and his companion on the other. You are a clergyman, and those persons are under your control, so I say no more. For you, young gentleman," he added, turning to the monitor, "if I did not feel that you were in some sort a slave to a vicious system yourself, be assured that, before I took my son away from this school—which I shall do now and at once—I would thrash you as long as I could stand over you, with this cane;" which indeed I should have liked to have seen him do exceedingly.

The next day I broke down, somehow, in a particularly well-conned task of mine before the head-master; and "I exceedingly regret," said Mr. Midas, "that I must substitute bread and water for your dinner to-day, and deprive you of your week's pocket-money also, at the instigation of Doctor Dumplin." When I complained to Janty of the injustice of my sentence, he replied, poking up his hair, that perhaps I had got up my lesson too well, and that over-accuracy was sometimes injudicious.

At this same school, a Monsieur Lucien, the French master and a Roman Catholic, suffered the torments, at the very least, of purgatory. He had served under Napoleon, and was accustomed, upon great festivals, to wear a dingy yellow ribband in his buttonhole—an order of merit which it was understood had been bestowed upon him by the emperor's own hands; and the emperor and the order and the Roman Catholic religion were the three themes which the boys chose for their pleasant satire.

Would Monsieur Lucy (Anglicè for Lucien) be so very kind as to state once again the circumstances under which he had obtained his reward of bravery? Was it true that the great Bonaparte had laid himself down upon his stomach in the long grass at Waterloo, pretending to be dead, and that he had eventually escaped disguised as a daughter of the regiment, in short petticoats, with a parasol? Was it Monsieur Lucy's serious conviction that the whole of us boys, being Protestants, would pass a considerable portion of time in the infernal regions?

"I do hope and trust that you all may, mon Dieu!" was wont to be his fervent and not unnatural reply.

"What!" added we, "and Doctor Dumplin too? Do you hope that he may be so treated?"

"Ah, well!" replied Monsieur Lucy, with a twinkle of his single eye, "the good doctor, he will, I do not doubt, have his reward." Which answer used to delight us excessively, and made Monsieur Lucien popular for several minutes.

At the great cramming school for Sandhurst, at which I had the privilege of being a pupil in later life, there was a kaleidoscope of ushers: fat and thin, grey-haired and red-haired, ignorant and learned, clean and dirty, gentlemanlike and very much otherwise. We had half a hundred of them in turn; some four or five were types of the varieties of all the rest; and, after fretting their little hour upon our school stage—they did not stop much longer—they seemed to run round behind, as in the minor theatres, and appear again in another costume; so like was one unto the other. They stood the insolence of Mr. Sackem, our head-master, for spaces of a fortnight up to six months, and then threw up in desperation their forty pounds per annum and the magnificent board and lodging.

Sackem was a scholastic blacksmith; he was of a coaly complexion and enormous bulk, had some little knowledge of mathematics, and was famous for hammering out scintillations of intelligence even from the very densest masses. He was ludicrously ignorant upon all subjects except those which he professed to teach; yet it was his custom to take every other master's class occasionally, "to see if they kept their boys up to the mark." Mouthing out Horace, so that all the school might hear him, and setting the classical assistant's teeth on edge by false quantities; correcting the French class while they conjugated "ater (être), to be," while Monsieur Adolphe's shoulders rose above his ears; and endeavouring, in his exceedingly gruff and monotonous tones, to point out the nice distinctions between wurde, würde, and werde. "Now, if he does it ein time more, so vill I give this up for gute," said the poor German master. But, it was of no use: it was impossible, under such an examiner, that any class could acquit themselves well; and, when he had caned the whole of it for their own and his inaccuracies, he was wont to abuse the ushers as the causes of failure. Whenever a boy of his broke down in endeavouring to pass into Sandhurst, he found out in what subject he had been weakest, and instantly fell tooth and nail upon that particular professor. One very gentlemanly person, cast by

some shipwreck of fortune upon the Sackem quicksands, was his public and notorious butt. He would cease his own bellowings for a minute or two, to listen to Mr. Vernon's measured tones, as he instructed his class laboriously and with patience, and would break in upon him suddenly thus :

"Now, Mr. Vernon, that milky sort of way of yours may be all very well at Dublin, but it don't pay here. Set them their lesson, and hear them their lesson ; and, if they don't know their lesson, send them up to me, and I've got a persuader here (the cane) that will teach it them. You come up, you boy, that seem to be Mr. Vernon's pet, come here! I'll see whether you've got your work up well or not!" And the pestilent creature never failed, by badgering the unhappy scholar in a vile Old Bailey sort of manner, to obtain a pretext for using the cane.

Layton was another kind-hearted usher whom Sackem used to treat most superciliously. How this gentleman ever came to fill his position amongst us was one of the usher mysteries. It was just as though the scamp of his family, the cigar-in-doors-and-latch-key hobbadehoy, the Bell's Life-reading go-to-the-Derby-at-any-price black sheep of his domestic flock had been pitched upon to form an assistant instructor of youth. His imposition book was half full of bets; his arithmetical examples were founded upon horse-racing or the chances of rouge-et-noir ; his clothes smelt of tobacco terribly ; and while he taught, he sat upon the hind legs of his tilted stool, with his feet in the air and both his hands in his trousers pockets.

There was also a jolly mathematician from the north, very fat and lazy, who was my especial admiration. He knew more when he was asleep, than Sackem was ever master of in his widest wakefulness ; and he habitually transacted business with his eyes closed. Sackem, whose speciality it was to appear very busy rather than to be so, used to be greatly annoyed by this. He would steal round from his own class and appear suddenly in the middle of Persey's, while that gentleman was sitting in silence with his mouth resembling an enormous fly-catcher on active service ; but, before the storm could well begin, the canny Yorkshireman was always ready with his "Now, boys, I've thowte of a problem for you, better than yon or any other that you'll find in the books." Dear old Persey! And yet to behave gratefully towards him, or civilly towards any master, was, in the public opinion, to sponge and to cotton, and to do all manner of slang things expressive of flattery and fawning baseness. The best art that an usher could practise as far as his own comfort was concerned, seemed to be the making himself independent of all sympathy and pleasant social relations ; to offer an equal indifference to the opinion of the head-master or of the boys, and to take the duty which he was paid to do without being swayed by any nice considerations. Such a course took Smilax, our great professor of the classics, and such took Grimshaw, our sometime instructor in Euclid.

Grimshaw was the worst usher of my acquaintance ; the only thoroughly wicked person of that class I ever met with. He seemed to have been born for Sackem, as Sackem was created for him ; yet they were not friends by any means. A sympathetic smile —peculiar as one would have thought to demons—used to pass between them when the one sent up an unhappy victim to the other to be beaten (so far Moloch and his high priest seemed to have a mutual understanding) ; but, as soon as the sacrifice was over, the cruel bond seemed to be dissolved. Sackem took a delight in contrasting himself with his still more ruffianly assistant. "I fancy if Mr. Grimshaw had the caning of you, you would not get off, sir, so easily ; " or, "Mr. Grimshaw tells me I am too lenient by half." And perhaps this was the solitary instance where our respected head-master could have hazarded a personal comparison without getting the worst of it. Grimshaw used to aver that he liked a rogue, but detested a hypocrite ; by which he was supposed to indicate that slight and innocent veil with which Mr. Sackem was wont to cover, without at all concealing, his more particularly unjust actions. The immediate cause of Grimshaw's being taken from us, was a policeman. What he had really done we never knew for certain, but I don't think his crime could have lost any of its aggravation through misplaced tenderness. He had the care of our cricket and foot-ball money, and we never saw any of it. Ten years ago, when an unfortunate person of this name had been convicted for burglary and murder at York, I met on the Great Northern a fellow-sufferer in those schoolboy days, who was actually bound for that metropolis on the express mission of seeing the end of Grimshaw, if the felon should happen, fortunately, to be he. But, he was not, I regret to say, the man.

How Smilax ever got among us was the mystery of mysteries ; he was an admirable Greek and Latin scholar, and was scarcely ever seen out of school-hours without one of his favourite ancient authors. He used to mutter Greek verses to himself when out of humour—as also, I am sorry to say, during the whole of church-time. He drew parallels in the dead languages between Sackem and the most awful villains of antiquity ; his favourite antitype of that gentleman was Thersites. "Thersites," he used to mumble, while Sackem was bawling at some irregularity in Smilax's class, "Thersites was the basest Greek that ever came to Troy."

Smilax was the worst dresser, and wore the nearest things akin to rags,

of any classical person I ever knew. He wiped his pens on his hair habitually. His hands were scrupulously clean, however, and he managed somehow to look like a scholar and a gentleman. His religion was that of an honourable heathen. His morals those of Epicurus, and his philosophy—it was no wonder—excessively cynical; but, it is my belief, that at some exceedingly remote time, and under circumstances at which I cannot make the faintest guess, Smilax was once a tolerably good and very kind-hearted man.

He went, eventually, the way of most ushers: he set up a school on his own account, and failed.

ON 'CHANGE IN PARIS.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

Not long since, there lived in the Rue Richelieu, behind one of those lofty gateways which separate the highly-decorated shops of this great thoroughfare, one Monsieur Perrin.

Monsieur Perrin occupied one of those sumptuous entresols in which the footstep is never heard; where Sèvres china, vast mirrors, clocks and bronzes of fantastic design stand dangerously near the visitor's elbow; and where or-molu vies in magnificence with buhl and marqueterie. Immediately behind the door that opened upon the general staircase of the vast hotel of which this entresol formed part, was a small room, devoted to Monsieur Perrin's business. Here, were no ornaments whatever; a small bronze oil-lamp, capped with a dingy green shade, being the only article upon the mantelpiece. Three or four cane-chairs were against the bare walls; one corner of the room was partitioned off by a high wooden screen; behind the rails of which green curtains were drawn, to veil the mysteries which young Monsieur Adolphe Beauvoir conducted on behalf of his employer.

Adolphe was the son of a wealthy Norman family. His father—once a notable millionnaire of France—had been a good friend to Monsieur Perrin at critical seasons; and, in fact, had on more than one occasion saved him from bankruptcy. But, at last, troubles came to Monsieur Beauvoir himself; and he was ruined in the railway mania. He fled to Algeria where he died, the proprietor of a small café in Constantine. Adolphe, when his father fled, was left to the care of Monsieur Perrin; who, after having given him a slight education, turned him to account in his office.

At first Adolphe was little better than an errand-boy; and spent more than half of every day running to and from the Bourse. All his early associations were with the Bourse, therefore, and with Bourse men. He had passed his youth in the midst of the gamblers who fed upon the industry of the poor; upon the honest investments of the small capitalists. He had seen dozens of companies formed under splendid auspices; advertised upon whole pages of the morning journals, sent up to extraordinary premiums, to fall to annihilating discount. He had seen men whom he met one day in dingy attire, tricked out on the morrow by Dusantoy, and dangling one of Verdier's malaccas. He had, on the other hand, watched young men of fortune slide from the eminence of a Stanhope drawn by a pair of blood-bays, to the cab at twenty-two sous the course. He had brushed past pale-faced men looking desperately calm; and on the morrow he had heard that they lay in the Morgue. He had watched wretched women weeping in the bye-streets; and had seen others dart furtively from the office of their agent-de-change with a roll of notes clutched in their greedy fingers. To him, the Bourse was the world. He grew up to know it alone as the arena where a man might fight his way to wealth. Like the people with whom he was in daily contact, he even despised the men whom he saw doing hard work for low wages. Why starve at a counter, when a lucky dash might any day make a bold pauper a millionnaire? He had heard that his father died a broken-hearted man, serving out demi-tasses to lazy Arabs; but, all his father's old friends had told him that Monsieur Beauvoir lost his head in the excitement of the railway mania, and speculated absurdly. One old man—to whom Monsieur Perrin sent him very often with letters, or bills, or mysterious messages—had favoured him with painful details on his father's short-comings as a financier. These communications were, however, offered with so many excuses, that Adolphe grew to like the old story-teller, and to anticipate a gossip with him on Bourse affairs with pleasure.

Poor young fellow! On all sides he was gathering experience; on all sides he sought advice. He had resolved at last, one morning—when there was a great rise in the Rentes, and he had met three or four young fellows who had realised from ten to twenty thousand francs each—to give notice to Monsieur Perrin that he should leave him within a month. He would now act on his own account; for he saw how each wheel worked within the other in that complicated machine, The Bourse. Instead of making fifteen hundred francs a-year, he would realise a thousand francs a-month; he would be, moreover, his own master.

Full of this resolution, he bent his way to the office of the old man who had told him so much about his father's affairs, just to ask his advice, before giving Monsieur Perrin notice. The old man was from home, and four or five gentlemen were sitting in his bureau waiting, in solemn silence. When Adolphe asked the clerk when he expected his employer back, a sneering laugh appeared

upon the face of one of the gentlemen who were waiting. Adolphe thought that the sneerer was an unhappy speculator, who, having come to ask for time, did not believe that the old gentleman was out, and was waiting doggedly to waylay him. So he went away, saying he would call to-morrow.

Dreaming of his plans, Adolphe wandered off in the afternoon to the Bois de Boulogne. At that time there was no Avenue de l'Impératrice; there was no lake dotted with gondolas; there was no green turf for grateful feet in summer time. Pedestrians wandered without plan along the straggling walks, under dense foliage, or through tangled underwood. Adolphe sauntered into the loneliest part of the wood, wondering what his old counsellor would say to him, and how he should invest the two thousand francs he had contrived to save in Monsieur Perrin's hard service.. He was aroused by a horse galloping past him at full speed, bearing a lady who was pale as death, and who wildly gesticulated to him that there was some horror behind her. He hurried forward till he saw a group of men and women surrounding something lying upon the ground under a dark tree. They beckoned him to approach. Peeping over the shoulders of one of the group, he saw the features—how ghastly in death!—of his old counsellor. A long black kerchief, drawn by the heavy weight it had sustained into a tight thin rope, lay upon the grass at hand, and told the close of the old man's story.

It was Adolphe's first view of death: he was inexpressibly shocked: he was, for a time, tongue-tied. The bystanders, seeing the pallid horror in his face, shook him and questioned him. Did he know the deceased? Presently he was able to tell them. Some gensd'armes came up, a cart was soon at hand, and the speculator's body was carried home. Adolphe, too, got to Monsieur Perrin's house, and was the bearer of the sad news to his placid employer, who merely remarked:

"I thought those Lyons at forty-six were a bad speculation."

Julie Perrin alone wept when she heard of the old man's death. Madame Perrin blanched somewhat, but she was a woman who prided herself upon her philosophy. She shut herself up in the evening, however, and told Adolphe that he would do well to take a walk—he must be strong-minded and meet the accidents of life with calmness. As for Julie, she was a little bird that the first frost would kill. Adolphe obeyed. Julie buried her red eyelids in her pillows, and Monsieur Perrin went to his café to learn how the old man stood, and who would be the principal sufferers by the affair. Adolphe took counsel of himself as he paced the Boulevards. He would remain with his employer, and went to bed with this resolution.

He was at his duties early on the morrow; for, of late, he had somewhat neglected his master's books. His dreams of sudden wealth had disturbed him; but, now that these had vanished, he had resolved to make up for lost time. It was not more than seven o'clock when he took his seat at his desk; the quarter after this hour had not struck, when a gentle tap against the screen behind which he worked roused him from a very perplexing sum. He called out pettishly:

"Come in."

Julie Perrin wished Adolphe good morning very timidly; then, seating herself not far from him, conjured up courage with a great and evident effort to speak boldly to him. Adolphe was astonished and dumb. The blood stood in two patches upon her young cheeks as she spoke rapidly to him in a low whisper.

"You were about to leave us. I know it: to lead the life of your father—of my father—of the poor gentleman who destroyed himself yesterday. It is very bold of a girl like me to advise a man like you; but let me pray of you—let me implore you—to be content here; and if you can, after a year or two, to give yourself some nobler ambition, than that of becoming a successful gambler on the Bourse. I have a father who hardly remembers my existence, and a mother who despises me when I pity the sorrows of poor work-people, or envy the simple country-folk. I believe that you, Adolphe, have a nature too noble to succeed on the Bourse. Remain where you are, to plan some honest course of life. I have got up early to speak to you, and to make you promise. I have not slept all night for thinking of the poor old gentleman who killed himself yesterday. Promise me."

Adolphe promised heartily; and when the girl retreated hastily from him full of shame at her own boldness, the figures over which he had been poring, only got into a denser tangle as he worked at them. First, he counted his balance; then he went over items; but no, it was no use; he must put it off until another time. Julies are the sworn enemies of arithmetic.

Monsieur Perrin was a trifle sterner than usual, as he presently passed through the office on his journey to the Petite Bourse, before the Opera Arcade. He bade Adolphe get his books in order as soon as possible. Monsieur Perrin had hardly turned the corner of the Boulevards, when his wife darted also through the office, and turned down the street in the direction of the Bibliothèque Impériale. Still Adolphe could not work. He had been in the habit of seeing Julie daily for years past; and her presence had never disturbed his calculations. But to-day, that serious little face, with tears beading the eyelids of the tender eyes, thrust itself before every rule of three he endeavoured to adjust. So he went out to execute his morning commissions; after having listened to his little coun-

sellor practising—he thought less briskly than usual—her favourite pieces of music. As he descended the stairs, he met Madame Perrin entering the house, and wiping her heated face, as she gave money to a cab-driver. Madame is fond of speed, thought Adolphe, as he noticed small spots of foam upon the flanks of the cab-horse.

Love, in modern times, has been the tailor's best friend. Every suitor of the nineteenth century spends more than his spare cash on personal adornments. A faultless fit, a glistening hat, tight gloves, and tighter boots proclaim the imminent peril of his position. Adolphe was hardly in love; he was hardly upon the uttermost circle of the whirlpool. Yet, had he closely examined the current of his thoughts, he would have found that they were almost imperceptibly falling into the fatal circles. The proof was, that it suddenly occurred to him that his hat was shabby and that his gloves were soiled; that he was tempted, in the Rue Vivienne, to buy a very showy dressing-gown; that he ordered home some patent-leather boots; and, if further proof were wanting, that he bought a fresh stick of cire de moustache. Then he turned towards the Rue Richelieu with a lighter step than usual.

He found Monsieur Perrin at home, and in the bureau. Glancing sternly at the young man's new light gloves, he asked him coldly for the keys of the desk. Adolphe, accustomed to the serious moods of his patron, gave him the keys carelessly enough, as he excused himself for his inability to work at his books that day. Monsieur Perrin silently opened the desk, drew out the books, and began to examine them. Adolphe thought the cool speculator wanted to see exactly the state in which he stood with the suicide of yesterday. The master threw off his hat as he went deeper into the figures; and then turned to Adolphe, telling him to go to the Rue Tronchet and there wait till Monsieur Biche—his client—came in. He was to be sure and see him, and tell him that if he chose to sell his dock shares he might realise ten francs at their last quotation. Adolphe departed on his errand, having been told to close the door gently behind him, as madame was ill.

He had no sooner departed than Monsieur Perrin hastily shut the little gate to the partition, behind which the desk was placed, and went again nervously to his examination. Julie entered the room timidly, to tell her father that her mother seemed to be very ill; but Monsieur Perrin only bade her leave him. He was engaged. As the affrightened girl closed the door, she started to hear a volley of terrible oaths uttered in a shrieked whisper from behind the partition. What could be the matter! "Scoundrel! thief!" muttered Monsieur Perrin, as he chinked the gold and ruffled the bank-paper in the desk. At last he closed the desk with a slam; locked it; buttoned the keys securely in his pocket, as if he feared they might be filched from him, and strode through the salon to madame's bed-room. Julie watched him, and trembled. She heard him talk in low, rapid sentences to her mother. In a few minutes the door was re-opened, and Monsieur Perrin appeared with his coat buttoned up to the chin. It is curious, but no Frenchman takes a strong resolution without buttoning his coat to its highest button-hole.

"Go to your mother," said the broker to his child, waving his hand impatiently, as he walked rapidly through the salon.

Julie went to her mother's bed-room. To her astonishment she heard that they were both going into the country that night. Julie saw that her mother's eyes were red. Had she been crying? No; years had passed away since Madame Perrin had shed a tear. Julie would have been delighted to feel one dripping from her upon her own cheeks.

"Don't stand staring at me, child," said the invalid. "Tell Madeleine that we go to-night to Tours."

Julie went, sad and confused enough, on her errand. She had to pass through the bureau to reach the kitchen. As she was about to leave it, there was a knock. She turned aside, and opened the door. It was Adolphe. He raised his hat to his pretty counsellor of the morning. She was looking very doleful. Poor girl, she had felt more than an ordinary interest in him for many months. She had regarded him as the only bit of honest nature in the house; and now, the thought of being buried in her mother's country-home, near Tours, was no pleasant prospect. Adolphe at once questioned her; and, in reply, heard a plain description of all that had passed since he left. He, too, heard the news of Julie's departure with vivid regret. A key put in the lock of the door disturbed them. Julie flew on her errand, and Adolphe seated himself at the desk, as Monsieur Perrin entered, telling somebody behind him to wait one minute without. On seeing Adolphe, however, he stepped a pace or two back, and beckoned to his companion. A sergent-de-ville entered the bureau. Monsieur Perrin pointed out Adolphe; and, saying to the police-officer "Do your duty!" walked hastily into the salon, shutting the door firmly behind him.

We pass over the indignation of Adolphe. Julie, who returned from the kitchen while Adolphe was expostulating with the officer, was caught by the arm by her father, who heard her voice and her sobbing. The young man was soon on his way over the Pont Nœuf to the Prefecture, pale and speechless with anger. He soon learned, when he had threaded three or four of the large and gloomy passages of the sombre Conciergerie, past rows of sallow detectives, that Monsieur Perrin had charged him with robbery. His

books were in an unsatisfactory state: money —a large sum—was missing; and that which deepened suspicion against him was, that while he alone had access to the desk where his master's money was kept, he had only within the last few days had an idea of leaving his employment. Then, he had bought a number of things for personal adornment. Adolphe vehemently asserted his innocence; while the prison officer simply told him, in a coolly polite voice, that he would soon have a fair opportunity of proving it.

Adolphe in due time was tried. It was proved that he alone could have possessed himself of the missing money. Monsieur Perrin's counsel dwelt upon the temptations to youth in a great and fascinating city like Paris. He enlarged upon the confidence that had been placed—alas! with the most lamentable results—in the prisoner; upon his sudden love of dress; and, above all, upon his evident idea of going on the Bourse with money filched from his employer. In reply, Adolphe's counsel denied the charge, asserted that the money spent by his client was part of his savings, and wound up by telling the jury that the prisoner, whom he had the honour to defend, had transacted business for Monsieur Perrin to the extent of millions, without ever having touched a single centime. The procureur spoke against Adolphe; and the jury convicted him. The poor fellow turned deadly pale as the judge sentenced him to a long term of imprisonment, bidding him lead an honest life on his return to the world.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

Julie had accompanied her mother to the country house near Tours on the day of Adolphe's arrest. Her mother had shut herself up in her room on her arrival, and had handed Julie over to the care of a maiden aunt, who endeavoured in vain to solve the problem of the child's profound melancholy. Every day's journals had been eagerly read; and, when Adolphe was convicted, a burst of grief declared to Monsieur Perrin's sister the state of Julie's mind. She loved the thief! Mademoiselle Rollin was one of those ladies to whom love was a monster of hideous mien, and in whose eyes Caliban very fairly represents all men. No prayers would have prevented her from revealing a tender secret to even the harshest of mothers. She rather gloried in the office of informer; and, on the present occasion, it was certainly with a step wonderfully elastic, considering Mademoiselle's age and figure, that she went to her sister's bedroom.

Madame Perrin heard all Mademoiselle Rollin had to say with calmness; but then calmness, with Madame, was passion. That lady expressed the most fiendish anger by the most delightful smiles. Her emotions appeared to have been so long at war with her face, that there was no relation between them. The most sagacious reader of the human eye could not have read in those of Madame Perrin a true word. She puzzled her sister utterly; and, when she heard of her daughter's grief at Adolphe's conviction, she simply answered that "It did not matter, since the young man had been convicted, and marriage or correspondence with him was impossible."

Julie was left to her melancholy thoughts, while Adolphe went through his daily round of humiliations, in the midst of rogues and vagabonds. At first he was stunned; but there he was, a branded felon—he who had never harmed a human creature! Then he broke out in imploring prayers to the gaolers, who looked knowing, if they did not laugh. For, nearly all prisoners begin with declarations of innocence; to which the prison authorities listen generally with the most unbelieving of ears. At last, worn out by his strong emotions, the poor fellow became resigned and calm; and did his work without muttering a word. He swallowed all the dreadful bitterness, with which, at first, he had regarded Monsieur Perrin's ruthless nature. He thought no longer of the stern face that rose up against him in the court, and proved that he was a thief, to the satisfaction of a jury, and with the concurrence of the judge—but of Julie; of that last look she gave him, as her father dragged her from the bureau—he could not fail to think he saw the story of her love, and cursed himself that he had remained blind so long. But, now, of what avail could the glorious knowledge be to him?

Monsieur Perrin talked of Adolphe's conviction as a salutary lesson, which, at the cost of his own tender heart, he had presented to the young men of Paris. It was highly necessary that confidential clerks should have such an example before them. It went horribly against his nature to prosecute—but both he and Madame Perrin felt their moral responsibility; and that, to let the thief escape, would have been to imperil a neighbour. Therefore Monsieur Perrin could boast that he had always been an indulgent employer, whose heart bled when he gave his clerk into custody, and was lacerated when he brought him to trial. All this was said over and over again, in various cafés near the Bourse, as the sharebroker took his absinthe with a client.

After three or four months spent in the country, Madame Perrin and Julie returned to town. Julie almost burst into tears when, on entering the old familiar bureau, she saw nobody at Adolphe's desk; while his office coat still hung in a corner, as of old. Her father kissed her on the forehead and her mother on both cheeks, as they entered the salon, and then begged them to leave him, as he had business with the sallow young man who was seated on the sofa.

Julie's heart was iced; everything was hard and cold; the very air seemed to want, even on that July night, a genial warmth. It was odd to see that the flowers in the window kept their bloom, even for four and twenty hours.

Madame Perrin went out immediately to pay her various visits, leaving Julie at home to fret. Poor girl! the world looked sad enough to her, as she went into the bureau, and indulged in the thoughts it brought to her mind. But, how infinitely was this sadness deepened when, on the following day, her father and mother told her that the sallow young gentleman she had seen on the day of her arrival, was destined to be her husband! He was rich; his family was good; and all the preliminaries had been arranged. In Paris, the custom for parents is to choose husbands for their daughters;—it is the custom for daughters to accept suitors, without knowing them, or caring for them. Julie had read of refractory children in various romances, but in real life she had seen only obedience. She loved Adolphe, even in his convict clothes, and in her soul believed him innocent. Her mother, to whom she confided this belief one day, told her angrily never to express such a conviction again, if she valued her love. Adolphe had been fairly tried and fairly convicted; and she begged that his name might never more be mentioned in her presence.

Therefore, how could Julie; in the presence of parents to whom money and family were the guiding stars of life; whose eyes were cold as winter moonlight when they fell upon her; whose words were rigid, and meant to be commands; how could she, timid as a bird, venture to go in the face of custom and say that she would not marry the husband of their choice; that she despised money purchased at the cost of every social virtue; that she loved a convict? She bowed her head and wept; and her hand was placed in that of a strange young man, who bowed low and kissed it formally. She was thus betrothed, and went away to her room in mortal horror of the time when the cold lips that had pressed her hand would claim the right to chill her cheek.

The marriage once determined on; the preliminaries were pressed forward with great vigour. Julie was in agony; the sight of her future husband disgusted her. She was told that she was too young to know her own mind; that she would learn to love him; that many of her school companions, who had married the husbands of their parents' choice, had lived to acknowledge the parental sagacity. She passed nearly all her time in her room; her father, since Adolphe's conviction, had kept the keys of his bureau himself, and had also attended to his own books. He was certain, now, that he could not be swindled. But, he told his wife, one evening, in Julie's presence, as he pored over his accounts, that he had been so long accustomed to a clerk, that he had almost forgotten how to cast up the simplest sum. There was a wide margin between the sum he ought to have in hand, according to his books, and the sum he actually possessed.

"Try again," replied Madame Perrin, calmly, as she laid out her embroidery over her knee, to notice the effect of the pattern. "Try again, monsieur; it must be your mistake."

Monsieur Perrin sat up very late that night, poring over figures, and twisting and recasting them, in the hope of obtaining a satisfactory result. Yet there were one or two thousand francs unaccounted for. The keys of the desk had never left his pocket; therefore, this time, he could not have been robbed. However, the sum was not large, and the marriage preparations demanded considerable time, so the rich broker could afford to forget the discrepancy for the moment, promising himself to go into it again at some future time. Madame Perrin, too, begged that Monsieur would not suffer so trivial a matter to interfere with the more important affairs he had in hand. It was small and mean. How could he expect to arrange all his vast affairs in a day or two? Monsieur Perrin saw the force of his wife's observations, and busied himself simply with his balance in hand, which he took remarkable care to keep under lock and key, the key being perpetually in his own pocket. He would not entrust it to any person on the face of the earth again, since Adolphe had deceived him. "The young rascal, too, had such an innocent look of his own," remarked Monsieur Perrin, as he twirled the key round his forefinger.

In three days Julie was to be married; in three days the sallow young gentleman was to be happy. Madame Perrin was very busy indeed, and very serious. But, that was natural in a mother who was about to lose her only child. She was continually out, thinking of trifles for her daughter; and then, when she came in, she invariably went to her own room. Monsieur Perrin was also very busy. In three days all this bustle would be over, and Monsieur and Madame Perrin would be alone. Madame could not sleep; at least, three nights before the marriage, even at one o'clock in the morning—when, standing in the vast courtyard of the hotel, there was not a light to be seen in the long rows of windows that towered to a sixth story—through the dense red curtains of Madame Perrin's boudoir the close observer might have perceived the faint glow from her lamp. She was still sitting up. The eye that could have peered through the red curtains would have perceived the lady, with three or four open letters before her, devouring their contents one after the other; then rising, apparently to listen at the door; then walking to and fro uneasily. The monotony of all this,

carried on as it was, during two or three hours—till indeed the eastern sky was paling before the coming sun—would have driven any outside observer away. Let us, however, watch emotions that leave the lines deeper in the calm, wan face. It wore even a ghastly pallor, when protruded between the curtains into the blue morning light. Madame Perrin seeing the dawn, appeared to gather energy, and to set about the object she had evidently held in view throughout her vigil, with firmness. From a drawer she took a key, stealthily, quietly. Then holding it to her bosom, as a treasure she feared to lose, she crept to the door, gently opened it, with the candle in one hand, and glided across the salon—towards the bureau!

In a minute she was before the open desk, and rolls of gold and notes lay before her. There was not a drop of blood in her face; and as her nimble fingers flew about the treasure—they looked like the fleshless hands of a skeleton. At every turn she glanced furtively round. Presently she began to count the money, and to select some of it. Unhappy woman! she knew not that two eyes were glaring upon her—were fixed with savage ferocity upon her hands. Still she knew not that as she moved from the desk, and passed to the salon door, in the cold gloom, icy hands would be laid upon her arm, and she would be asked to render up an account of her theft. Foolish woman! how cleverly she re-arranged the money she left in the desk, as she had arranged it before—so that everything looked as orderly as when she had first lifted the lid. Still, in the full confidence of old guilt successfully concealed, she remained to fold up the abstracted notes,—and to enclose them in a letter which she took from her pocket.

And then! Why then the eyes that had glared upon her all along, met hers; the hands that had been clenched in an agony of suppressed rage fell heavily upon her shoulder; and her husband bayed out his charge at her more like a mad dog than a man. She fell to the ground and moaned, while Monsieur Perrin, recovering his self-possession as the words flew through his lips, poured out all his wrath. It was she who had stolen his money; who had dared to see Adolphe sent to prison; who had calmly slept, while the young man worked in felon clothes; who had talked trite morals over his fall; who had seen his agony unmoved and had borne witness against him. As this combination of horrors grew to its close, Julie crept to her fainting mother's side, and supported her. When Monsieur Perrin could only pace the room hurriedly, to find at short intervals new epithets to cast at the fallen woman, Julie, her eyes brimming with tears, forgot even Adolphe, in her attention to a mother from whose lips she had rarely heard a tender word.

The letter in which Madame Perrin had enclosed the money, explained all. She had been gambling on the Bourse. She had won at times, and had hoarded up her winnings. She grew miserly as the fascination of the game fastened itself upon her, and she learned to care for neither husband nor child. But, in an evil hour, she had lost all her winnings, and was in debt. Her agent, with whom she had stolen interviews, threatened to apply to her husband for payment, unless his account was at once settled. She dared not raise money on her little property near Tours, lest the mortgage should come to the knowledge of her husband; there remained but one resource—to rob him. She reconciled the act the more readily to her conscience by persuading or half-persuading herself that a wife could not steal from a husband. And so she stole Adolphe's key. That is, she took it one day, and it was missed before she had had time to replace it, so that she was compelled to keep it. It was searched for, and at last given up. Adolphe bought a new one. This left her at liberty to draw more than once upon the cash-box; while Adolphe, who had neglected for a month or so to balance his books, and had resolved to make up for lost time, a few days before that on which he would go through them, according to custom, with Monsieur Perrin, remained for some weeks unconscious of the deficit. The calmness with which Madame afterwards saw Adolphe arrested, tried, and condemned, was feigned, but with a struggle. She had not the courage left—Adolphe once arrested—to denounce herself to the world. Her flight to Tours was simply an escape from the daily, the hourly torture of her husband's presence. Her very severity, when speaking of the young man's crime, was but the cloak in which it was her incessant struggle to hide her own guilt more effectually. The long life of studied hypocrisy she had led, had well prepared her to play a virtuously indignant part towards Adolphe.

As the grey dawn grew into a brilliant morning, Monsieur Perrin became less and less passionate. He spoke at longer intervals and in a calmer voice than when he began his chapter of reproaches. He paced the room less hurriedly. Still, every now and then, as a new light broke in upon him and showed him another view of his family disgrace, he would burst out over more, and pour out a fresh volley of imprecations. Madame Perrin never spoke a single word. She left her hand clasped in that of Julie; and while poor Julie, pale as death, timidly followed the movements of her father, without daring to interpose a syllable. At last, Monsieur Perrin halted before the sofa; and assuming great authority said to Madame:

"Leave this by the first train, for Tours: and there, Madame, have the goodness to draw up a full and accurate history of this affair. I shall need it to effect the liberation

of the young man you have ruined, together with your husband and your child. Julie may go with you."

It was strange to see the haughty Madame Perrin, in the cringing and meekly-obedient woman who now crawled across the salon, and went to the room. Julie followed, having kissed her father's forehead.

In due time Adolphe was liberated. Monsieur Perrin calmly went through the forms necessary to establish his wife's guilt, and Adolphe's innocence. He sought an interview with the prisoner; but, Adolphe declined to see him. He remembered too well the stern face that had risen up against him in the court of justice.

The young prisoner was liberated at length, and the day that saw him outside the prison walls, also saw him on his way to Havre. It is supposed that he went to America; but, to this hour, he has never since been heard of. All he left behind him was a letter for Julie; which that sad girl keeps warm in her bosom, as she follows her mother from room to room in the far off retirement to which Monsieur Perrin has consigned them, and which, poor man, he shares with them.

We have here, only one of the many little tragedies that are played out, from day to day, on the Place de la Bourse, to the horror of the bystanders, and to the profit of newspaper reporters.

APOTHECARIES.

About one hundred and fifty years ago, talking like an apothecary was a proverbial phrase for talking nonsense; and our early dramatists, when they produced an apothecary on the stage always presented him as a garrulous and foolish man. It was in what may be called the middle period of the history of the apothecary's calling in this country that it had thus fallen into grave contempt. At first it was honoured, and it is now, at last, honoured again. At first there were few of the fraternity. Dr. Friend mentions a time when there was only one apothecary in all London. Now, there are in England and Wales about seven thousand gentlemen who, when tyros, took their freedom out to kill (or cure) where stands a structure on a rising hill,

> Nigh where Fleet Ditch descends in sable streams,
> To wash his sooty Naiads in the Thames,

namely, at the Hall of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in Blackfriars. Of course apothecaries do not monopolise the licence to kill, or we never should have heard of that country in which it was a custom to confer upon the public executioner, after he had performed his office on a certain number of condemned people, the degree of doctor.

Against doctors, surgeons, and apothecaries in this country, and at all times, many a sneer has been levelled. What is said against doctors and surgeons is equally true or false here and elsewhere. The whole medical republic may assert itself. Much, however, that is said about apothecaries in this country seems to be true—and is not true, for in England the apothecary is a person differing in almost every respect but name from the apothecary of the continent; the word Apothecary means even in England what it does not mean in Scotland. We believe that we are usefully employed in showing what is really represented in this country by Apothecaries' Hall.

Once upon a time, says Herodotus, in the land of the wise there were no doctors. In Egypt and Babylon the diseased were exposed in the most public streets, and passers-by were invited to look at them, in order that they who had suffered under similar complaints and had recovered, might tell what it was that cured them. Nobody, says Strabo, was allowed to go by without offering his gratuitous opinion and advice. Then, since it was found that this practical idea did not work to perfection, the Egyptian priests made themselves students of medicine, each man binding himself to the study of one sole disease. Nature, it is said, was studied, for it was reported that the ibis taught the use of injections and that from the hippopotamus a lesson was got in phlebotomy. Pliny is the authority for this, who says that the hippopotamus, whenever he grows too plethoric and unwieldy, opens a vein in his leg with a sharp-pointed reed found on the banks of Nile. The Greeks adopted and enlarged what they found taught elsewhere about the healing art, and had enough faith in the necessity of medicine to provide the gods with a professional attendant. Pluto, we are told upon the best authority—Homer's, of course—when wounded by the arrow of Hercules, applied to Pæon, the physician of the gods, for surgical assistance, and obtained relief. Pæon then was a general practitioner, accepting cases both in medicine and surgery.

In this country, there are, at this time, three classes of men following the healing art—physicians, surgeons, and those who are best defined under the name of general practitioners. Elsewhere there are two classes only. Celsus and Galen both of them lay down the divisions of the profession distinctly. There were first the men who cured by study of the processes of nature in the human body, and by adapting to them regimen and diet; these were the original physicians, nature-students as their name pronounces them. Secondly, there were the chirurgeons or surgeons (hand-workers is the meaning of their name), who attended to the wounds and other ailments curable by hand. Thirdly, there were the pharmacists, who cured by drugs. Some of the first class of practitioners used drugs; but,

by many, the use of them was repudiated. This triple division of the healing art was still acknowledged in the sixteenth century, when there were few great physicians who wrote books and did not write on diet and the art of cookery. Thus the physicians were, at first, in close alliance with the cooks. Sometimes, indeed, the alliance was more close than wholesome. One of the earliest illustrations of the fact that in old times the pharmacist, as an apothecary in the strictest sense, was employed as an adviser of the sick occurs in a story told by Cicero of a man named Lucius Clodius, a travelling apothecary, who was accustomed to set up as a distributor of advice and medicine in the market-places of the towns through which he passed. This man happened to pass through Larinum at a time when the grandmother of Oppianicus was ill, and was employed by her son to attend her. Now this son was an infamous fellow, who kept a physician in his pay to destroy by his prescriptions every one who was supposed to be an impediment upon his path. His mother was among those whom he desired to poison, but she, being on her guard, steadily refused both the attendance and the medicine of her son's favourite. Application was made therefore to the travelling pharmacopolist, whom she agreed to trust. Unhappily the apothecary was as bad as the physician, took his bribe, and killed his patient with the first dose he administered.

We speak of the pharmacopolist who practised; but it is to be understood that in those days the physician kept his own drugs in his house—the list of medicaments was smaller than it is at present—and compounded his own medicines. Galen attempts to show that Hippocrates, father of medicine, made up his own prescriptions; Celsus and Galen, it is certain, both dispensed their medicines themselves, and knew nothing of the refinements of dignity that were to be introduced by their successors. If Hippocrates did not dispense his own physic, it can only be said that he was not true to his principles; for "a physician," he says, in one of his books, "ought to have his shop provided with plenty of all necessary things, as lint, rollers, splints; let there be likewise in readiness at all times another small cabinet of such things as may serve for occasions of going far from home; let him have also all sorts of plasters, potions, and purging medicines, so contrived that they may keep some considerable time, and likewise such as may be had and used while they are fresh."

The ideal physician of Hippocrates is, in this country, the apothecary of the present day. Galen says that he had an apotheké in which his drugs were kept, and where his medicines were always made under his own eye, or by his hand. For one moment we pause on the word apotheké, whence apothecary is derived. It meant among the Greeks a place where anything is put by and preserved,—especially, in the first instance, wine. The Romans had no wine-cellars, but kept their wine-jars upon upper floors, where they believed that the contents would ripen faster. The small floors were called fumaria, the large ones apothecæ. The apotheca being a dry, airy place, became, of course, the best possible store-room for drugs, and many apothecas became drug-stores, with an apothecarius in charge. It is a misfortune, then—if it be one—attached to the name of apothecary that it has in it association with the shop. But, to say nothing of Podalirius and Machaon, Cullen and William Hunter dispensed their own medicines. So also did Dr. Peckey, who inserted in the *Postman* of the sixteenth of January, in the year seventeen hundred, when doctors and apothecaries were at hottest war together, this advertisement:

> At the Angel and Crown, in Basing Lane, near Bow Lane, lives J. Peckey, a graduate in the University of Oxford, and of many years' standing in the College of Physicians, London; where all sick people that come to him may have for sixpence a faithful account of their diseases, and plain directions for diet and other things they can prepare themselves: and such as have occasion for medicines may have them of him at reasonable rates, without paying anything for advice: and he will visit any sick person in London or the liberties thereof, in the daytime, for two shillings and sixpence, and anywhere else within the Bills of Mortality for five shillings.

Doctor Peckey's charges are extremely modest, which has not been at all times the case among those of his brotherhood. The present practice among physicians of being paid only by voluntary fees, seems to have arisen out of a law passed to prevent extortion. In Galen's time, respectable physicians would not undertake small cases, but they had acquired the habit of compounding secret nostrums, which continued in full force for generations, and was common also in the sixteenth century, when all classical customs were revived. Aetius complains much, in his writings, of the immense price asked for respectable nostrums. Nicostratus used to ask two talents for his isotheos, or antidote against the colic. At last Valentinian established in Rome fourteen salaried physicians to attend gratuitously on the poor, and obliged, by the same law, every other physician to accept the voluntary donation of every other patient, when he had recovered from his disease, without making express charge, or taking advantage of any promises rashly made under suffering. Here we have not the fee system, but most probably the ground-work of it. This mode of after-payment remained for many centuries the custom of the empire. A physician of the fifteenth century, Ericus Cordus, complained much of the reluctance of his patients to reward him properly when they were well, for service done to them in sickness.

In the eighth and ninth centuries surgery and pharmacy began to decline in reputation. The apothecary, said a Latin couplet, is the physician's right hand, the surgeon his left hand; but this meant that the physician was the head and body of the whole profession, with the hands entirely subject to his will. At the same time there grew up among these doctors paramount so strong a faith in astrology, in charms and magical medicaments, that it became necessary, as some thought, to warn them lest they gave advice destructive to the soul; since it is better for us, as said Theodorus, to be always sick, than sound by the contempt of God.

In an old historical account of the proceedings of the College of Physicians against empirics and unlicensed practitioners written by Dr. Charles Goodall, a fellow of the said college, we read how in King James's reign one John Lambe, having acquired great fame by his cures, was examined at the College of Physicians by request of the Bishop of Durham, and among the examination questions put to him we find that,

"Being asked in Astrology what house he looketh unto to know a disease, or the event of it: and how the lord ascendant should stand thereto?

"He answereth, he looks for the sixth house: which being disproved, he saith he understands nothing therein, but what he hath out of Caliman: and being asked what books he hath read in that art, he saith he hath none but Caliman."

It was long, in fact, before the traces of these false ideas of nature were removed from the prescriptions of the doctors. Doctor Merrett, in the year sixteen hundred and sixty-nine, denounced the frauds of apothecaries who sell to their patients sheep's lungs for fox lungs, and the bone of an ox's heart for that of a stag's heart; and, at about the same time, Culpepper, in translating the Pharmacopœia, or official catalogue of medicinal remedies and preparations issued by the College of Physicians, ridicules some of the contents in a list like this, inserting his own comments by parenthesis:

"The fat, grease, or suet of a duck, goose, eel, boar, heron, thymallos" (if you know where to get it), "dog, capon, beaver, wild cat, stork, hedge-hog, hen, man, lion, hare, kite, or jack" (if they have any fat I am persuaded 'tis worth twelve-pence the grain), "wolf, mouse of the mountain" (if you can catch them), "pardal, hog, serpent, badger, bear, fox, vulture" (if you can catch them), "east and west benzoar, viper's flesh, the brains of hares and sparrows, the rennet of a lamb, kid, hare, and a calf and a horse too" (quoth the college). [They should have put the rennet of an ass to make medicine for their addle-brains.] "The excrement of a goose, of a dog, of a goat, of swallows, of men, of women, of mice, of peacocks," &c., &c.

Well might the founders in this country of the science of physic speak even at a time later than this with little reverence for the learning supposed to be proper to their craft.

"It is very evident," wrote Sir Richard Blackmore in his treatise on the small-pox, "that a man of good sense, vivacity, and spirit, may arrive at the highest rank of physicians without the assistance of great erudition and the knowledge of books; and this was the case of Dr. Sydenham, who became an able and eminent physician, though he never designed to take up the profession till the civil wars were composed, and then being a disbanded officer, he entered upon it for a maintenance, without any learning properly preparatory for the undertaking of it. And to show the reader what contempt he had for writings in physic, when one day I asked him to advise me what books I should read to qualify me for practice, he replied, 'Read Don Quixote—it is a very good book. I read it still.' So low an opinion had this celebrated man of the learning collected out of the authors, his predecessors. And a late celebrated physician, whose judgment was universally relied upon as almost infallible in his profession, used to say, as I am well informed, that when he died he would leave behind him the whole mystery of physic upon half a sheet of paper."

He who said this was Doctor Radcliffe, physician to King William the Third, the most successful practitioner of his own day, and one of the honoured patriarchs of the London College of Physicians. It is requisite thus far to understand what the physician was during the years of which we now proceed to speak. Up to the time when Garth's Dispensary was published, there continued to be much general truth in the impression here conveyed. After that time, in the days of Mead, the erudite physician, and of Cheselden, the skilful surgeon, whom Pope linked with each other in a line—

I'll try what Mead and Cheselden advise,

and who consulted together on the case of Sir Isaac Newton, there began with us another and a better epoch in the history of medicine.

The first doctors in England were the Druids, who, by-the-by, collected their own misletoe. The second race of doctors was provided also by the religious orders; they were the monks (whose practice the Pope afterwards forbade); and there came next a transition period, during which there was much wavering between the two callings of physic and divinity. Thus, among other instances, we find that Richard, the son of Nigel, Bishop of Ely, who is called, not the physician, but the apothecary to King Henry the Second and the two succeeding monarchs, afterwards was created Bishop of London. There was no College of Physicians then

existing, and this king's apothecary — the first man, we believe, to whom the calling is ascribed upon our English records—evidently was no shopkeeper of small importance. No doubt he practised medicine. Certainly, in the year one thousand three hundred and forty-five, Coursus de Gangeland, called an apothecary of London, serving about the person of King Edward the Third, received a pension of sixpence a-day as a reward for his attendance on the king during a serious illness which he had in Scotland. Henry the Eighth gave forty marks a-year to John Soda, apothecary, as a medical attendant on the Princess Mary, who was a delicate unhealthy young woman, so that we thus have the first indications of the position of an English apothecary, as one whose calling for two hundred years maintained itself, and continued to maintain itself till a few years after the establishment of the College of Physicians, as that of a man who might be engaged even by kings in practice of the healing art. But in the third year of Queen Mary's reign, thirty-seven years after the establishment of the College of Physicians, both surgeons and apothecaries were prohibited the practising of physic. In Henry the Eighth's time it had been settled, on the other hand, that surgery was an especial part of physic, and any of the company or fellowship of physicians were allowed to engage in it.

We remain awhile with Henry the Eighth, whose reign is important in the history of the medical profession in this country. In the third year of that king there was legislation against unskilled practitioners and women who introduced witchcraft and sorcery, with pretended nostrums, to the high displeasure of God, the great disgrace of the faculty, and the grievous damage and destruction of the king's liege subjects. It enacted that no person within the city of London, or a circuit of seven miles thereof, shall take upon himself to practise either as physician or surgeon till he have been examined and approved of by the Bishop of London or Dean of St. Paul's, assisted by four physicians or surgeons of established reputation, according to the branch of practice designed to be engaged in, under the penalty of five pounds per month for non-compliance. A similar rule was to govern the profession in other dioceses, fellows of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge being in all cases excepted and provided against.

This law removed apothecaries to a lower level; they became mixed up altogether as mere druggists with the grocers. They had neither obtained University degrees, nor passed any ordeal of examination; if they advised the sick, they did so on the faith of the skill they picked up by observing the prescriptions of more learned men. Seven years after the act passed, the physicians were established by King Henry the Eighth, in a college,—had a royal charter of incorporation,—and in another four or five years when it was confirmed to them, the office of examining candidates for admission into any branch of the profession—for they declared surgery a part of physic—was taken out of the hands of the clergy and conferred, as a new privilege, upon the College of Physicians. In Queen Mary's reign the College of Physicians acquired also a right of scrutiny over apothecaries' shops. Doctor of Medicine was then supreme; apothecary was a druggist only, who wore a blue apron, but had few ideas beyond his mortar, and sold not simply drugs but also spices, snuff, tobacco, and sugar and plums. In the time of James the First the apothecaries were incorporated with the grocers under a new charter in the fourth year of his reign. But they did not remain for more than nine years so united. King James was at all times ready to make money by the granting of new charters; that was, indeed, one of the ways and means familiar to the royal family of Stuart. James the First granted fifteen incorporations, Charles the First the same number, Cromwell one, Charles the Second nine or ten. The apothecaries had been formed into one guild with the old fraternity of grocers in the reign of Edward the Third, and the charter several times renewed had been confirmed by Henry the Sixth, who granted to them the power by skilled persons—competent apothecaries—of searching and condemning drugs; the same power which was afterwards conferred upon the College of Physicians. To the charter-granting Stuart his two body physicians represented the prayer of sundry apothecaries on behalf of their body, that they might have a distinct incorporation as apothecaries; and this separation from the grocers was effected in the year sixteen hundred and fifteen. The higher class of the apothecaries had again earned credit for their calling; their guild was called not a Company but a Society, and had so much of royal favour that King James used to call them his own guild, being moved much to favour them by his apothecary, Gideon de Laune, whose effigy, as that of a benefactor, is still to be seen at the hall in Blackfriars. Gideon, says a descendant of his, lived piously to the age of ninety-seven, was worth as many thousand pounds as he lived years, and had by one wife thirty-seven children.

Thus the apothecaries became organised, and more able to carry on the war which for a time it was their part in this country to wage with the physicians. It has been already said that in Queen Mary's reign surgeons and apothecaries were prohibited the practising of physic. In Charles the First's time, the physicians found it requisite to petition for another royal edict, that no apothecary should, under severe penalties, compound or administer medicines without the prescription

the United Stock of the Society of Apothecaries. It is a distinct commercial enterprise, carried on, not by the society, but by members of the society at its hall, and under its sanction. It has its own separate officers and committees, by whom, not by the master and wardens of the company, its accounts are audited and its affairs controlled. It is well managed, and yields high dividends to its proprietors, which were increased by one-third, in consequence of the demand for drugs during the recent war. It has been also an important agent in the keeping of bad drugs out of the market.

Whoever pays a visit to the Hall in Blackfriars, will be shown how it is composed of two distinct parts. From a steam-engine room he is taken to where great mill-stones powder rhubarb, rows of steam-pestles pound in iron mortars, steam-rollers mix hills of ointment, enormous stills silently do their work, calomel sublimes in closed ovens, magnesia is made and evaporated, crucibles are hot, and coppers all heated by steam are full of costly juices from all corners of the world. He will find in the cellar barrels fresh tapped of compound tincture of cardamoms, tincture of rhubarb, and such medicated brews; he will find in a private laboratory the most delicate scientific tests and processes employed for purposes of trade by a skilful chemist; he will find warehouses and packing-rooms, perhaps, heaped up with boxes of drugs to be sent out by the next ship to India, and apparently designed to kill or cure all the inhabitants of Asia. These are the premises of the United Stock. From them he will be led into the Hall itself, the great room on the walls of which he reads who has been mindful of the widow—for sixteen widows of poor members the society provides annuities—and round the tables of which, he may, perhaps, see young medical students deep in the agonies of an examination to prove that they have been educated as becomes those who are to join a liberal profession. There is a separate examination-room in which those pass as licentiates who can; it is hung with old pictures, and there is a small library hidden away in that anti-chamber, known irreverently as the funking-room, by nervous candidates. This is the domain of the whole Society. Here it does its appointed duty to the commonwealth.

For, as it has been said, the decision of the House of Lords that an apothecary might prescribe, did not provide all that belonged to the public want which has brought the English apothecary of the present day into the average position occupied by the physician of the continent. If apothecaries might prescribe, skilful or unskilful, there was danger to be feared. Therefore there arose at the beginning of this century an agitation among many of the apothecaries to procure for themselves an examining board that should exclude incompetent men from the use of the privileges they enjoyed. There was an agitation for some years; several bills were introduced in parliament, opposed and abandoned; but at last in eighteen hundred and fifteen an Apothecaries Act was passed which gave to the Society of Apothecaries the appointment of a board of their own members for the licensing of all who wished to exercise their calling, and conferring privileges well known to the public. Before this act passed such was the state of the profession that not more than about one person in nine of those who practised medicine had been educated for the work in which they were engaged. Not only has the operation of the Apothecaries Act changed altogether this condition of affairs, but it is due to the Society of Apothecaries to admit that by a high-spirited discharge of its new function, and a constant careful raising of the standard of competence, it has compelled strictness in others, and is adding continually to the importance and efficiency of that body of medical advisers which it has been called upon to furnish. Its work, which never has flagged, had at the end of the first twenty years of trial proved itself so well, that to a select committee of the House of Commons, Sir Henry Halford confessed—"I was one of those who were sorry that the power was ever given out of the hands of the physicians to license practitioners of that description; but since they have had it, I must do the apothecaries the justice to say, that they have executed that act extremely well; and that the character of that branch of the profession has been amazingly raised since they have had that authority."

That is still the universal testimony. If we have told our story clearly we have shown that the apothecaries simply have become what—considering the position taken by physicians in this country—they could not help becoming; and that since the apothecaries' license does not qualify for surgery, while at the same time the surgeons' diploma does not qualify for medicine, the class of surgeon-apothecary was quite as inevitably called for. That all this history is only an illustration of the stern law of supply and demand a few figures will tell at once. There are in England and Wales at this time only four hundred physicians; with an English license, including as such Doctors and Bachelors of Oxford, Cambridge, and London, Fellows, Members, Licentiates, and Extra-Licentiates of the Physicians' College; but there are five thousand five hundred and eighty persons engaged in general practice with the two qualifications provided by the English apothecaries and the surgeons; one thousand eight hundred and eighty more practising with the single diploma of the English College of Surgeons, and one thousand two hundred with no more than the English Apothecaries' license. Eight thousand five hundred is now the number of the class that the physicians once thought

themselves able to crush, and the country finds that it can manage with no more than four hundred physicians.

THE GIGLIO FESTA.

A CROWD has assembled round the gates of the Naples railway-office to go to the festival of the Giglios at Nola. Young men with their "spose" dressed out in the rich and varied colours which nature herself seems to suggest in Italy; others who had once come down alone with said wives, but who now bring three or four black and brown-skinned repetitions of papa and mamma in addition; foreigners, like myself, intent on seeing a curious fête; tradesmen, priests, soldiers, flower-girls, fisher-women, and boys and girls, of every rank and costume; all making such a crowd that the gates are ordered to be shut, and no more tickets issued. A bell tinkles, and the waiting-rooms being opened, out we rush and take our seats. Tinkle, tinkle, says another bell, followed by something between a shriek and a whistle, and off we start for Nola.

A glance round the capacious carriage shows me several hard-working tradesmen whom I had seen in their shirtsleeves in Toledo during the week. How happy they look with their children beside them! Life is not then one perpetual round of toil and trouble. Sunday is not, to their minds, what the week had been to their bodies—a weight and a cloud, oppressing and saddening. O no! their bright faces say, as plainly as faces can say, that amidst all the unavoidable anxieties and sufferings of life, God had not forgotten to be gracious, and that He had brought them out this day to look upon the loveliness of Nature. Then they look out of windows on the vines which are trained in rich festoons, from tree to tree, forming, down long lines of poplars, such pretty vistas; and on the sunburnt corn being cut and carried throughout the whole country as we pass along; and on the mulberry-trees with their thick glistening foliage, and the hemp and the flax-fields—forming altogether such a picture of calm beauty that, had they ever read the Bible (which I am very sure they never had), they would have thought of Jesus Christ and his disciples walking through the corn-fields on a Sunday. At Cancello, the road diverges on the left to Caserta and on the right to Nola. So we are compelled to change our train, and mingle with fresh companions. In the corner is a poor woman, a native of Nola, so ill with malaria fever, that no more than a few days of existence appear to remain for her. Yet the prospect of seeing the Giglios had given her strength enough to pay perhaps her last visit to her birth-place. By her side sits a stout, burly-looking man, with two small children, evidently great pets.

"And where is the wife?" said the dying woman.

"Ah!" said the man, "a misfortune! God's will be done!" and so the strong and healthy could not boast himself above the weak. God had touched him, as well as the poor attenuated being at his side. He is an intelligent man, and gives me a great deal of information. Nola, he says, has a population of fourteen thousand souls. It is in the province, and under the government of the Intendente (Lord Lieutenant) of Avellino. It has also a Sottintendente, a Syndic, Royal Judge, Inspector of Police, and extensive barracks for soldiers. In fact Nola is not a place to be sneezed at. There is no staple trade here, continued my informant, the Nolanese are an agricultural people, and, besides grain, grow a great quantity of oil and small wine. Look at those mountains! they are covered with thousands of olives. As to the small wine, that was a fact evident from the mode of cultivation, for I never knew good wine produced from festooned vines. And this makes me think of another subject showing the intimate yet almost invisible connection which often exists between things. The small wine; or, perhaps, the adulterated wine consequent on the universal grape failure has ruined the silk of this year. It is the custom of the Nolanese, and of the people of this country generally, to steep the eggs of the silk-worms in strong pure wine for a short time—the silk in this way acquires strength. The operation is described as making the eggs drunk, but this year, they did not get drunk, and perhaps not more than one third of the eggs were hatched. Hence, a most unusual sight at this season of the year;—the mulberry-trees were clothed with foliage, the fruit had actually ripened, and quantities were continually brought into the town to make mulberry wine; and very good it is too, said the jolly widower, smacking his lips. Do you see, he continued, that quarry-looking place on the right? Well, that was the old Campo Marzo. There were found some of the most precious vases which now grace the Museo Borbonico, and which have set the modern world mad with admiration. The government has now, however, prohibited excavation; and, since eighteen hundred and fifty-two, it has been cultivated as you see.

Here we are, however, in Nola, a large, irregularly-built city on a vast plain, with a background of mountains. The thousands in the city are waiting for the thousands continually arriving. Through a mob of coachmen with various coloured feathers in their hats, we fight our way to the fair. There are cloths and cottons from Salerno and Scaphati, very gay, and not very bad; there is crockery from Naples and Ischia; there are fruits and sweets from everywhere; small boys are looking on with longing faces; dark bright eyes are glistening, while Italian Johnny Raws are standing by with hands in their pockets, wishing to be generous. A few

steps farther, and we encounter the tent of the inspector of the police flaunting with pink drapery; and then we enter the principal street. What a display of finery in the shops! Barbers' brass basins, as they hang upon his door, are as bright as mirrors; and festoons of teeth declare the skill of the great practitioner of Nola. But brighter still are the eyes, and far whiter the teeth, of the pretty damsels who crowd the windows above.

I scarcely know why it is, but a crowd is always in motion, without any definite object; it pushes on because it can go farther, and so I moved on, thinking that I must be right as long as the crowd kept moving. At length I exclaimed, "How that steeple shines like burnished gold! and it is covered, too, with flowers, and flags, and evergreens! Mercy! it moves!" "Steeple?" said my friend. "Why, that is one of the Giglios." At length, I had attained the object of my visit; I had seen a Giglio.

But what is this Giglio? asks the reader. I shall describe it first architecturally. The frame-work is made of wood interlaced with canes, and consists of a series of towers one upon the other, tapering gradually away. In this one there are forty-one towers, all tastefully decorated with architectural ornaments, with flowers and evergreens, with drapery, paintings, and even statuary; whilst at each corner of each tower there floats a flag. Anything more original, dazzling, or pretty, cannot well be conceived. The summit of this fabric is surmounted by the statue of a saint of the brotherhood who constructed it; and, as its height is upwards of a hundred feet, his saintship commands a very fine view. Of these Giglios there are nine, and this is the history of their construction:—The different trades associate together to defray the expenses. Thus, this year amongst others, there were the gardeners, the shoemakers, the butchers, the bakers, the confectioners, the tailors, and others; and each trade vies with the other who shall make the most beautiful Giglio. I am compelled to confess that the gardeners bear the bell, as might have been expected in a country strictly agricultural. That there may be no mistake either, as to the proprietorship of the Giglio, each trade hangs its emblems on some conspicuous part of the structure. Thus, the shoemakers display shoes; the tailors, some waistcoats; the butchers, some joints of mutton; the bakers, biscuits; and the gardeners, festoons of flowers and gardening implements. Around the basement of the lowest tower is seated a full brass band; and, on the upper towers stand, at rather a perilous height, both men and boys. The Giglio derives its title, I believe, from some fancied resemblance to the flower of that name, the lily. Its height, and its swaying backward and forward when in motion, give it some resemblance to a Brobdignag lily.

Of course the Giglios are the centre of attraction; and, pressing forward, we find ourselves in the piazza before the Sottintendente's house. This is evidently the west end of Nola; and, before starting in procession, the Giglios assemble there to dance before his excellency. Nine mighty steeples, one hundred feet high, dancing! How could it be? Each Giglio is borne on the shoulders of fifty men, with relays, and the exertion appears to be tremendous, even to raise the structure from the ground. Yet a species of devotion as ardent as that which inspires the followers of Juggernaut, tempts the best men from Naples to bear these Christian idols. From four hundred to five hundred or more of the strongest porters of the capital throng Nola, filled with religious fervour—which is not in the slightest degree diminished by the fact of their receiving a piastre each, and as much as they can eat and drink.

The procession is at length in movement; hundreds of priests and singing boys are at the head of it; the windows, and the tented roofs of every house in the city, are crowded with the curious and the devout. Look at the poor bearers! I never saw muscle so strained. It seems as if they must sink beneath the enormous weight of the car. Each with a pole on his shoulder, and with the other arm resting on his neighbour, they bend and struggle on for a few steps, and then reposing, again resume their labour. In this way, for three mortal hours, they parade every street in the town; returning at last to the west end in front of the great man's house. It had been my good fortune to make the acquaintance of the great man; so I find myself in his canopied drawing-room on the roof, with all the notables of the neighbourhood. There are princes and dukes enough to send an American traveller into fits of ecstacy; and as to marquises and counts, their number is positively astonishing.

"From what time does this curious custom date?" I ask of one of the dignitaries.

"From the time," he replies, "when Saint Paolino wrought the miracle on our bell. O! it was a great miracle: the saint ran his finger through the bell, and the hole still remains; but whether the bell was in a state of fusion or not I cannot say."

"Whether cold or fused," I observe, with a grave face, "the miracle would be equally remarkable." The subject, however, is too delicate to pursue.

"The festa began," continues the same person, "last night. Some thousands must have entered town during the evening, and it is little sleep we have had, I can assure you. You know, signor, the custom which persons or parties have of sending one another defiances, challenges to sing? They place themselves at considerable intervals from one another, and the challenger begins to improvise some words in a singular chaunt. The others take it up; then the challenger

resumes, and so they continue, hour after hour, until they work themselves up to a state of fury (for the chaunt is generally full of gibes and ridicules of the other party), and not unfrequently the challenge ends in blood. So it did last night. A party came into the town, rented a window, and sent a challenge, which was accepted by another party; but the chaunt of the challenger was too biting, and it ended in one man being stabbed. We were enabled," he goes on to say, "to stop one dangerous affair. Four men from Monte Vergine, dedicated, as you know, to a celebrated Madonna, sent a challenge to chaunt with four men in Nola; but the police got scent of it and arrested them."

To the religious festivity now succeed the quite as serious operations of eating and drinking. About fifty thousand people here crowded into the town; so that if the houses had been made of India rubber, it would be impossible to take the entire crowd in. With trees, therefore, and flowers, hundreds of tents were improvised, and the appearance of the place might suggest some idea of the Feast of Tabernacles.

From my window, where I am enjoying the hospitality of a jolly captain in the guards, I look down on one of these scenes. There are a variety of tables. As the ladies enter, they go behind two mulberry trees, and prepare their dinner toilette by taking off their gowns and jewellery, and wiping their faces. The gentlemen take off their coats. There are mountains of maccaroni with pomi d'oro and cheese, and great hunks of ragout, and ricottos interspersed with capers and anchovy, and immense glass flagons of wine; so called by courtesy. And there is shrieking, and laughing, and no end of merriment. The tables are at last thrust aside, and up starts a young woman who challenges a man to dance, Tarantella, and she tires him down, and then comes on another—and they dance, and clap hands, and pant, and at last both give over by mutual consent; and so dancing becomes general, and many hundreds in Nola are overflowing with happiness. About four or five o'clock there is a general move amongst the merry crew. Eager for variety, they have had enough of Nola, now that the Giglios, and the feasting, and the dancing are over; and off they must gallop to Naples, where they have to display themselves and their finery to the terror-stricken aristocrats, who are enjoying their very proper and very dusty drive in the Riviera di Chiaja. It is a funny sight as they move off one by one. Every species of carriage is to be seen that was ever invented. The carrozzella, and the carritella, and the cittadina, and waggons, and planks — all festooned and covered in with branches of trees and flowers. They looked much more picturesque than any gilded carriage on a court day. Then there are horses, and donkeys, and mules, and oxen—one, two, three abreast—and all dressed out with purchases characteristic of the festival. Every steed has its plume, and its rosary of nut-kernels, and all are covered over with bouquets. As for the tenants of these singular vehicles, their hats are of course decorated with painted feathers and golden leaves — not with tricolored feathers; for was not a French attaché recently stopped by the police on his return from a country fête thus adorned? Their necks, and waists, and arms, and ears hung with chains of nut-kernels in commemoration of the fête.

Time was perhaps when the religious element predominated in these fêtes; and the pious pilgrims brought away ivory rosaries, as records and preservers. In the present day, perhaps, the pleasure element predominates; the rosaries are made of nuts, and all are eaten, even those which have decorated the donkeys' necks. Each man carries a gay flag made in Nola, in which red is most conspicuous, and it is dotted all over with pieces of gilt leaf. Waving these, and shouting, singing, screaming, off they start for Naples, as rapidly as their steeds can carry them. In the capital, many thousand expectants are waiting to receive them; the windows are lined with spectators, who laugh at the jolly pilgrims.

It is unnecessary to say that it is not considered genteel to leave Nola so early. Besides, there are some races to come off, so that I found myself, through the interest of my military friend, in the grand stand, once more with princes and dukes. There are bodies of cavalry to keep the grounds, who gallop about, rear, and appear to have a vast deal to do. One by one the running horses are brought out, with their small jockeys by their side, dressed in clothes a world too wide for them. One horse has a white towel tied over one eye, and another blinkers; and, bless my heart, how they kick and rear! At last the riders are mounted, and off they start. What a sensation on the course! The favourite horse won't move beyond a certain point, however, spite of three men who run behind to whip him. No! he won't move upon compulsion. There is no knowing what he might choose to do if left to himself; and thus the race is won, not by half a neck, but by half a mile. The next race is a very close one; the whippers keeping near to the horses all the way, and they came in almost nose to nose. A proud day it is for the winner, who is immediately surrounded by a crowd of friends, who conducted him in triumph back to Nola. As for the unfortunate loser, he was greeted with hisses.

And now, good-bye to San Paolino, and to Nola town—the beautiful mountains behind it are painted in vivid purple; castles and monasteries are glowing in the last deep tints of the setting sun, and the shrill whistle

of the railway warns us that it is time to be off. Fighting and struggling, we manage at length to get to our seats. But come to a dead stop at Cancello. There are no carriages to take on the hundreds who are waiting.

At last, however, I find my way back to Naples.

As we enter the capital at half-past ten o'clock, it seemed as if we had passed from one festivity to another. Our Nola friends are either driving about and shouting as vigorously as when last we saw them, or are else seated at tables ranged along the pavements of the streets. Good night, my merry friends! May this festa be not your last, and may I live to meet you all again next year!

TWO HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

"If I were to tell you all, sir, they cannot drag me from my death-bed here and hang me, can they?... Besides, I am innocent:... But what does that matter? More innocent men than I have been hung for less crimes than murder before this. I will not tell you."

"Murder?" said I, with unfeigned astonishment. "Murder, Charlton?" For this man I was attending in my capacity as house-surgeon of the Henborough workhouse. I had known him for years, and of all my present patients he had seemed the simplest and least violent; his anxious eyes—which closed so lightly even in sleep—his averted looks when spoken to, his nervous timidity at the sight of any strange face, I had set down as the outward signs of a broken spirit and a waning brain; for he had had enough of sorrows to shake a stronger mind than his. I could remember him with wife and children about him, in a respectable, if not an extensive way of business; and why it suddenly fell off and was given up, and what misfortune had changed the couple who had been before so blithe, I had often wondered. Their son, Robert, was now in the Crimea, a sergeant; their daughter, Clara, a milliner's apprentice in the north; Mrs. Charlton had died a few months after the failure of their trade, of a lingering and somewhat strange disease; her husband was indeed, as he had said, upon his death-bed. I had offered to send for Clara at my own charge, but he would not hear of it.

"I would not have a soul at my bedside, save you, doctor, for worlds," he said.

He was quite friendless, too. His chamber was common to five other workhouse folk, but it was a July day, and they were sunning themselves in the paved court outside; the noonday beams which poured into the long bare room found nothing fair to rest upon; no print upon the whitewashed wall, no commonest wild-flower in any of the few drab-coloured mugs that strewed the table; no sign of comfort anywhere. The sick man lay upon his little iron bed, and I was sitting upon the wooden stool beside it; his hand lay upon mine, and his face was turned towards the door, listening. I rose, and locked it; and it was then that he began, as I have said, to speak of murder, and his innocence—to ask if it would be dangerous to confess all.

I said, "No; nothing can harm you, now. What you say to me is a secret as long as you shall live; you may speak as if I was the clergyman"—whom he had refused for some reason, I knew not what, to see. "If it will ease your mind to tell me anything, say on."

"You have known me, doctor, this twenty years, and will easily believe me when I say that I no more expected to become dependent on the parish and to die in this workhouse, than I dreamt of the possibility of my committing—any very terrible crime. I was young to the world then, and foolish; and my wife was not older or wiser. We were not strong-minded folk—nor, alas! even straightforward; through a plausible story of dear times coming—which may yet have been partly true—we sold many a pound of butter and ounce of tea; and if it was not always a pound nor always an ounce, it was never over the just weight, but under. Spirits, also—there being no public-house close by—which we of course had no licence to sell, we would let our best customers purchase, and drink in our back parlour, which appeared in their weekly bills under the head of candles, or what not; so that speaking before our own children, we had to fabricate strange stories, and give things their wrong names; and many other devices we had, which, though they got us little gains, seemed not much, on the whole, to benefit us. I have purposely told you the worst of us, because it will explain our future conduct the more easily; but you must not suppose that we were thieves, or very wicked people; we scarcely knew what wrong we were doing to others, and far less to ourselves; and I don't think in other respects we were a bad pair. I know Sarah loved me, and I her and our two children, dearly. Our shop, as you remember, was between Henborough and Swaffham, which were then quite separate towns, with straggling houses and long lines of railing to connect them. Our house was the farthest of the last row, not detached." Here the sick man raised himself on his hands, and whispered: "Are you sure there's nobody at the keyhole?—nobody at any crack or cranny, nor at the skylight?"

I assured him that there was not; and then the wretched creature pulled out from a sort of opossum pocket in his very skin, and under his flannel vest, a thin piece of paper, folded; keeping it carefully beneath the bed-clothes, so as to prevent its being visible from without, he opened it, and I read these printed words:

TWO HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

The above will be given to any person not actually concerned in the crime, who shall give such informa-

tion as shall lead to the discovery of the murderer or murderers of John Spigat, in the Swaffham Road, Henborough, on the night of December the thirty-first, eighteen hundred and thirty-five.

"Why, you, Charlton, were one of the jurymen, if I remember right, who were upon the inquest in that matter?" I said.

"I was, doctor; and are you sure there's nobody under the bed, or in the cupboard, or behind the chimney-board?—and his murderer also?"

"Good heavens?" I exclaimed. "Why what a hypocritical ruffian you must have been?"

"Doctor, good doctor, have mercy upon me: don't tell, don't tell! and don't think so hardly of me until you have heard me out; I am not so bad as I seem:

"It was on a New Year's Eve; near twenty years ago, and very late at night—close upon twelve,—when I had put up my last shutter, and was going to lock the door of my shop, that a stranger called. He had come from the Swaffham end of the road, and I had never seen him before in all my life; he could hardly speak at all, he was so awfully drunk. Red in face, thick in speech, and trembling all over like a leaf; he said he must have more rum. I told him that we only had ginger-beer and such like drinks; and, besides, that it was too late at that time of night to sell people anything. He swore horribly at this, said that my wife (who was still behind the counter in the shop), and I, were both liars, that we had sold rum often enough to other folks, he knew very well. He managed to stagger up the two stone steps and push in at the door. He should get into the back parlour, and sleep there all night, he said. I took him by the collar, intending to set him outside the door, but he was a tall and stout-made man, and I could not—he struggled with me in a dull heavy manner. I had hard matter to thrust him from the parlour. I did do so, and pushed him violently, and he fell on the floor at full length, like a log; he never groaned after he had touched the floor, but lay silent and motionless.

"My wife cried, 'What have you done, George? You've killed the man.'

"'Nonsense,' I said; but when we tried to raise him, and saw the glassy look of his eyes, I knew it was true. A hundred horrible thoughts would have crowded into my mind at once, but that, swifter than they, devices for getting the corpse away, and removing suspicion from ourselves had already filled it; the simple honest plan of telling the truth, and calling in the police, at once, never so much as suggested itself. What if a neighbour should step in, as this poor murdered man had done, and find him lying there? If one of the children even should be awakened by the noise, and come down into the shop! If the watchman himself, seeing our door yet open at that time of night, should call! There was not a moment to lose; I took the dead man by the head, and my wife, all in a tremble, managed to raise his legs, and shutting the door carefully after us, we bore our dreadful burden about fifty yards along the Swaffham Road; we tried to set it against the railings which ran along both sides of what is now Macartney Street, but the inanimate thing slipped down again each time in a mere heap. It was surprising how anxious we were to prop it up, and, although every instant was precious to us, we spent some five minutes in doing so,—it seemed inhuman, somehow, to leave it on the pavement. In a sort of desperate terror at last, I twined the arms about the bars, and we fled back in silence. Nothing was stirring. We heard the tread of the watchman outside our closed door, and his "Past twelve o'clock!" die away in the distance, but we had put out the lights, and felt certain he had observed nothing unusual, —nothing of ours—oh horror!—dropped in the road, while we had gone about our terrible task. One of the children, Clara, began to cry out, 'Where have you been, mother?' She had heard us, then, leave the house.

"'I only helped your father to put up the shutters, child,' she answered, and the girl was quieted by the ready lie.

We went to bed immediately, but not to sleep; our ears were on the stretch for the moment when the cry should arise, and we should know the body was found. One o'clock, two, three, four: the time crept on with painful slowness, and the hours and quarters seemed to prolong their iron voice horribly. And now the dawn was breaking, and there was light enough for a chance traveller to see the corpse. We saw it all night long, as we were to see it for years and as I see it now. Five, six: it was time for us to get up and open the shop, lest suspicion should arise that way, and we did so. There was a turn in the Swaffham Road beyond our house, and it was farther than that; and yet I dared not look in that direction as I undid the shutters.

"'Watch, watch! Help, help!' Then they have found him at last; and the street fills with a hurrying crowd; and I run with them, among the first. But my wife, she is faint with terror, and dares not move, telling the children who have heard the cries, that it is nothing.

"It leans against the railing where we set it; but its right hand—yes, by heaven, it points to me! Nobody saw my face, they were all so horror-struck with the dreadful thing, or I should have been carried off to prison at once, without any further proof, I know. As they were about to take it down, Doctor Scott (your predecessor at the union, sir), who was in the crowd, cried 'Stop!' and called attention to the position of the arms: 'I do not think—bear witness all of you—that any fit, or strong convulsion whatsoever, could have thus twisted them.' And I bore witness loudly with the rest. I was, as you

have said, sir, upon the jury. I thought it best, safest to be, despite the thing I had to deal with. When all the evidence, which was chiefly medical, had been given, I was with the minority for 'Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown,' against the rest, who were for 'Death by apoplexy;' and we starved the others out. O, sir, the shifts and lies I had to invent, the terrors that racked me by night and by day—and all begotten by my cunning dishonest ways, would have been punishment for a murderer indeed! About this great reward here, of two hundred pounds, there was a ceaseless talk; and the wildest surmises as to how it would be gained, amongst our neighbours. They came into our little back parlour just as usual, and wounded us with every word. 'Now, mark my words,' said one, 'the fellow will be discovered in the end and hanged;' and 'Ay, ay, murder will out, sooner or later,' said the rest. 'Sooner or later!' Great heaven, how those words haunted us! for now indeed we had played a part which, if discovered, would have proved us at once, guilty: my wife took to her bed, and fairly sickened from sheer anxiety. She had fever, and was delirious for weeks; and I never dared to leave her, or let another watch by her bedside, for fear of what she might rave upon. When the end came at last, my poor wife wanted to see the clergyman; but I said 'No.' It was for the same reason that I would not send for Mr. Roland here, myself; he was a magistrate. You're not a magistrate?" demanded poor Charlton, suddenly, with the damps of terror mingling with those of death upon his forehead. I quieted him as well as I was able, and begged him to see his mind at ease as to any earthly tribunal. After a little time, and without noticing the warning contained in my last words, he continued—

"Amongst the folks in our parlour, one man in particular, a tailor, by name Deckham, seemed never weary of talking of Spigat's murder. He was a miserably poor ill-favoured person, who had drilled his way into our company by means of a sharp tongue. One night I told him flatly enough I did not like such mournful talk, and was quite tired of that theme. 'Why, one would really suppose that you killed the man yourself?' he retorted. It seemed as if an arrow had darted through my brain for a moment, and I could hardly keep upon my legs; but laughed it off as well as I could. He stayed, however, to the very last; and when we too were alone, he drew a small strap, such as fastens trousers at the foot, from an inner pocket, and asked me whether it was mine; 'for I found it,' said he, 'inside your house, betwixt the back of the door and the wall.' 'No, it is not,' I replied, but rather hesitatingly, for I saw he had some purpose in the question. 'I thought so,' he went on, 'for it is the fellow to that found upon John Spigat, the man who was murdered fifty yards from here, in the Swaffham Road.'

I could not speak at first, nor do anything beyond making deprecating and pitiful motions with my hands; but afterwards I made shift to tell this Deckham the whole truth: "Likely enough, Master Charlton," he said, quite coolly; "atween friends, however, such things looks better than before a judge and jury; I'll put a padlock on this here tongue, safe enough, if you'll fit it, as I'm sure like a sensible man you will, with a golden key." I felt the halter already round my neck—this friend jerking it loosely or tightly as he would; but there seemed to be then no help for it. I paid five pounds that evening—miserable dolt that I was—as a retaining fee to a villain for working my total ruin. Many and many a time did my children and myself go without the barest necessaries that that man might have the means to indulge in debauchery and extravagance. I sold the shop, and removed with my motherless bairns to another part of the town; but Henborough itself my tyrant would not permit me to leave. Loss of custom, loss of health, and almost loss of reason followed, of which you now know the cause. This incubus bestrode me day and night, and wore my very life out. Often and often have I been a murderer at heart because of that mocking fiend; once, indeed, he confessed to me, that a vague suspicion had alone induced him to try me in the matter, and that the strap story was only an ingenious touchstone of his own. Cunning as I was then, I had been overreached, and anxious to efface the very breath of slander I had given a gratuitous proof of guilt. Here, in this workhouse, friendless, penniless, I am safe from his persecutions; but I tremble for my children, lest he use them also as his tools." I strove to comfort him, and to represent the folly of having submitted to such a treatment at first; but I was speaking to ears that could not listen. The wifeless, childless man was dying fast, an awful lesson to the crafty and untruthful. What a little leaven of dishonesty had leavened all this lump! How the path of life had been darkened to it for ever by the merest shadow! While I almost doubted whether he was alive or dead, he sprang up once again into a sitting posture, and pressed the paper, which he had concealed so carefully, into my hand. A sudden dread of awakening suspicion, even after death, had nerved dissolving nature for that effort, and hardly did the grey head touch the pillow before his worn heart ceased to beat. Near twenty years, as long as most burn on in fruitless hope, it had throbbed in groundless fear!

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MY SPINSTERS.

My young bachelor friends, suspend your ordinary avocations for a few minutes and listen to me. I will do you no harm. I am only a benevolent old gentleman, residing in a sweet country town, possessing a comfortable property, a devoted housekeeper, and some charming domestic animals. I have no wife, no children, no poor relations, no cares to worry me, and nothing particular to do. I am a nice, harmless, idle old man. Come, listen to me freely, my gallant young bachelor friends.

I have a mania. It is not saving money, not good living, not music, nor smoking, nor angling, nor pottery, nor old pictures. It is nothing of the selfish sort. It is, my young friends, simply an amiable mania for promoting the marriages of the single ladies of my acquaintance. I call them all My Spinsters; and the one industrious object of my idle existence is to help them to a settlement for life. In my own youth I missed the chance of getting a wife, as I have always firmly believed, for want of meeting with a tender-hearted old gentleman like myself to help me to the necessary spinster. It is possibly this reflection which originally led to the formation of the benevolent mania that now possesses me. Perhaps sheer idleness, a gallant turn of mind, and living in a sweet country town have had something to do with it also. But, I cannot undertake to account categorically for this one tender and remarkable peculiarity of mine. I can only confess to it freely at the outset. You know the worst of me now from my own lips. Surely I am a candid as well as a harmless old man?

Although I have been very successful, considering the badness of the times, in setting the marriage-bells ringing and stimulating the wedding-cake trade of my native town, I must still acknowledge, with just as much disappointment and regret as it is possible for so amiable an old man as myself to feel, that the number of My Spinsters now on hand is something little short of prodigious. Not from any deficiency of the necessary attraction on their parts—nothing shall ever induce me to admit that—but solely from want of a sufficiently large bachelor public to appeal to. The sweet country town in which I live is also a small country town, and my spinsters are wasting amid a miserably reduced population of eligible men. Under these disastrous circumstances, I must try if I cannot get them settled in life by making them known beyond their own limits—in fact, by asking the Conductor of this widely-circulated publication to let me try the effect of advertising one or two sample lots of marriageable women in his columns. You see I shirk nothing. I do not attempt any deception as to the motive which induces me to call you together. I appear before you in the character of an amateur matrimonial agent having a few choice spinsters to dispose of; and I can wait patiently, my brisk young bachelor friends, until I find that you are ready to make me a bid.

Let us now proceed at once to business. Shall we try a soft and sentimental lot to begin with? I am anxious to avoid mistakes at the outset, and I think softness and sentiment are perhaps the safest attractions to start upon. Lot One. The six unmarried sisters of my friend Mr. Bettifer.

I became acquainted, gentlemen, with Mr. Bettifer in our local reading-rooms immediately after he came to settle in my neighbourhood. He was then a very young man, in delicate health, with a tendency to be melancholy and a turn for metaphysics. He was kind enough to ask me to call on him; and I found that he lived with six sisters at my first visit, and under the following agreeable circumstances.

I was shown into a very long room, with a piano at one end of it and an easel at another. Mr. Bettifer was alone at his writing-desk when I came in. I apologised for interrupting him, but he very politely assured me that my presence acted as an inestimable relief to his mind, which had been stretched—to use his own strong language—on the metaphysical rack all the morning. He gave his forehead a violent rub as he said that, and we sat down and looked seriously at one another in silence. I am not at all a bashful old man, but I began nevertheless to feel a little confused at this period of the interview.

"I know no question so embarrassing," said Mr. Bettifer, by way of starting the talk pleasantly, "as the question, on which I

have been engaged this morning, of our own Personality. Here am I, and there are you—let us say two Personalities. Are we a permanent, or are we a transient thing? There is the problem, my dear sir, that I have been vainly trying to solve since breakfast-time. Can you be one and the same person, for example, for two moments together, any more than two successive moments can be one and the same moment?—My sister Kitty."

The door opened as he said these last words, and a tall young lady glided serenely into the room. I rose and bowed, and the tall young lady sank softly into a chair opposite me. Mr. Bettifer went on:

"You may tell me that our substance is constantly changing. I grant you that; but do you get me out of the difficulty? No; you only plunge me in deeper. For it is not substance, but——My sister Maria."

The door opened again. A second tall young lady glided in, and sank into a chair by her sister's side. Mr. Bettifer went on:

"Not substance, but consciousness which constitutes Personality. Now what is the nature of consciousness?—My sisters Emily and Jane."

The door opened for the third time and two tall young ladies glided in, and sank into two chairs by the sides of their two sisters. Mr. Bettifer went on:

"Now the nature of consciousness I take to be that it cannot be the same in any two moments, nor consequently the personality constituted by it. Do you grant me that?"

Not understanding a word he said, I, of course, granted it directly. Just as I said yes, the door opened again, a fifth tall young lady glided in, and assisted in lengthening the charming row formed by her sisters. Mr. Bettifer murmured indicatively, "My sister Elizabeth," and made a note of what I had granted him, on the manuscript by his side.

"What lovely weather!" I remarked, to change the conversation.

"Beautiful!" answered five melodious voices.

The door opened again.

"Beautiful, indeed!" said a sixth melodious voice.

"My sister Harriet," said Mr. Bettifer, finishing his note of my metaphysical admission.

They all sat in one fascinating row. It was like being at a party. I actually felt uncomfortable in my coloured trowsers—more uncomfortable still, when "my sister Harriet" begged that she might not interrupt our previous conversation.

"We are so fond of metaphysical subjects," said Miss Elizabeth.

"Except that we think them rather exhausting for dear Alfred," said Miss Jane.

"Dear Alfred!" repeated the Misses Emily, Maria, and Kitty, in mellifluous chorus.

Not having a heart of stone, I was so profoundly touched, that I would have tried to resume the subject. But, Mr. Bettifer waved his hand impatiently, and said that he rejected the conclusion at which he was now obliged to arrive after my admission—the said conclusion being, that our present self was not our yesterday's self, but another self mistaken for it, which, in its turn, had no connection with the self of to-morrow. As this certainly sounded rather unsatisfactory, I agreed with Mr. Bettifer that we had exhausted that particular view of the subject, and that we had better defer starting another until a future opportunity. An embarrassing pause followed our renunciation of metaphysics for the day. Miss Elizabeth broke the silence by asking me if I was fond of pictures; and before I could say Yes, Miss Harriet followed her by asking me if I was fond of music.

"Will you show your pictures, dear?" said Miss Elizabeth to Miss Harriet.

"Will you sing, dear?" said Miss Harriet to Miss Elizabeth.

"Oh, do dear!" said the Misses Jane and Emily to Miss Elizabeth.

"Oh, yes, dear!" said the Misses Maria and Kitty to Miss Harriet.

There was an artless symmetry and balance of affection in all that these six sensitive creatures said and did. The fair Elizabeth was followed to the end of the room where the piano was, by Jane and Emily. The lovely Harriet was attended in the direction of the easel by Maria and Kitty. I went to see the picture first. The scene was the bottom of the sea; and the subject, A Forsaken Mermaid. The unsentimental, or fishy lower half of the sea nymph was dexterously hidden in a coral grove before which she was sitting, in an atmosphere of limpid blue water. She had beautiful long green hair, and was shedding those solid tears which we always see in pictures and never in real life. Groups of pet fishes circled around her with their eyes fixed mournfully on their forlorn mistress. A line at the top of the picture, and a strip of blue above it, represented the surface of the ocean and the sky; the monotony of this part of the composition being artfully broken by a receding golden galley with a purple sail, containing the fickle fisher youth who had forsaken the mermaid. I had hardly had time to say what a beautiful picture it was, before Miss Maria put her handkerchief to her eyes, and, overcome by the pathetic nature of the scene pourtrayed, hurriedly left the room. Miss Kitty followed, to attend on and console her; and Miss Harriet, after covering up her picture with a sigh, followed to assist Miss Kitty. I began to doubt whether I ought not to have gone out next, to support all three; but, Mr. Bettifer, who had hitherto remained in the back ground, lost in metaphysical speculation, came forward to

remind me that the music was waiting to claim my admiration next.

"Excuse their excessive sensibility," he said, "I have done my best to harden them and make them worldly; but it is not of the slightest use. Will you come to the piano?"

Miss Elizabeth began to sing immediately, with the attendant sylphs, Jane and Emily, on either side of her, to turn over the music. It was a ballad composition—music and words by the lovely singer herself. A lady was dreaming in an ancient castle, a dog was howling in a ruined courtyard, an owl was hooting in a neighbouring forest, a tyrant was striding in an echoing hall, and a page was singing among moonlit flowers. First five verses. Tune, so like the Mistletoe Bough, that the composer of the same ought really to have been ashamed of himself. Sixth verse, the lady wakes with a scream. Seventh, the tyrant loads his arquebus. Eighth, the faithful page, hearing the scream among the moonlit flowers, advances to the castle. Ninth, the dog gives a warning bark, and the tyrant fires a chance shot in the darkness. Tenth, the page weltering in his blood, the lady dead of a broken heart, Miss Jane so affected by the catastrophe that Miss Emily is obliged to lead her from the room, and Miss Elizabeth so anxious about them both as to be forced to shut up the piano, and hasten after them with a smelling-bottle in her hand. Such gentlemen, were the interesting circumstances under which I was first introduced to the six sentimental Spinsters now on view in these pages.

Yes, my fortunate young bachelor friends, incredible as it must appear to you, after the brief introductory narrative which you have just perused, these six angels of sensibility are really single angels still. Tell yourselves off to the corresponding number of half-a-dozen, with your offers ready on your tongues, and your hearts thrown open to tender investigation, while favourable circumstances yet give you a chance. First bachelor, do you want pictorial genius, hair in plain bands, and sweet sorrowful dignity in every movement? —pursue Miss Harriet and be happy. Second bachelor: Do you want music, poetry, ringlets, and a snaky gracefulness about the region of the waist?—keep your eye on Miss Elizabeth. Third and fourth bachelors: Do you want sensitive appreciation of pictorial genius, and hair a l'Imperatrice? Fifth and sixth bachelors: Do you want equally sensitive appreciation of musical and poetical genius, and three glossy curls on either side of a gentle cheek?—kneel before Emily and Jane; fly to Maria and Kitty! Finally (for I must end, after all, for the sake of brevity, by speaking of the six sentimental Spinsters in the aggregate), do you, young gentlemen, want pale cheeks, limpid eyes, swan-like necks, low waists, tall forms, and no money? You do—I know you do. Go then, enviable youths!—go tenderly—go immediately—go all six, and try your luck with the Miss Bettifers!

Let me now appeal to other, and possibly to fewer tastes, by trying a sample of a new kind. It shall be something neither soft, yielding, nor hysterical this time. You who agree with the poet that

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you who like girls to have opinions of their own, and to play their parts spiritedly in the give and take of conversation, do me the favour to approach, and permit me to introduce you to the three Miss Cruttwells. At the same time, gentlemen, I must inform you, with my usual candour, that this lot is short, sharp, and, on occasion, shrill. If you have not a talent for arguing, and a knack at instantaneous definition, you will find the Miss Cruttwells too much for you, and had better wait for my next sample. And yet for a certain peculiar class of customer, these are really very choice spinsters. For instance, any young legal gentleman, who would like to have his wits kept sharp for his profession, by constant disputation, could not do better than address himself (as logically as possible) to one of the Miss Cruttwells. Perhaps the young legal gentleman will be so obliging as to accompany me on a morning call.

It is a fine spring day, with a light air and plenty of round white clouds flying over the blue sky, when we go to pay our visit. We are admitted, and find the three young ladies in their morning room. Miss Martha Cruttwell is fond of statistical subjects, and is annotating a pamphlet. Miss Barbara Cruttwell likes geology, and is filling a cabinet with ticketted bits of stone. Miss Charlotte Cruttwell has a manly taste for dogs, and is nursing two fat puppies on her lap. All three have florid complexions, which they set off impressively by wearing dingy dresses. All three have a winning habit of winking both eyes incessantly, and a delightfully characteristic way of wearing their hair very tight, and very far off their faces. All three acknowledge my young legal friend's bow in—what may seem to him—a very short, sharp manner; and modestly refrain from helping him by saying a word to begin the conversation. He is, perhaps, unreasonably disconcerted, by this, and therefore, starts the talk weakly and conventionally, by saying that it is a fine day.

"Fine!" exclaims Miss Martha, with a look of amazement at her sister. "Fine!" with a stare of perplexity at my young legal friend. "Dear me! what do you mean, how, by a fine day?"

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"Fine!" exclaims Miss Martha, with a look of amazement at her sister. "Fine!" with a stare of perplexity at my young legal friend. "Dear me! what do you mean, how, by a fine day?"

"We were just saying how cold it was," says Miss Barbara.

"And how very like rain," says Miss Charlotte, with a look at the white clouds outside, which happen to be obscuring the sun for a few minutes.

"But what do you mean, now, by a fine day?" persists Miss Martha.

My young legal friend is put on his mettle by this time, and answers with professional readiness and precision:

"At this uncertain spring season, my definition of a fine day, is a day on which you do not feel the want of your great-coat, your goloshes, or your umbrella."

"Oh, no," says Miss Martha, "surely not! At least, that does not appear to me to be at all a definition of a fine day. Barbara? Charlotte?"

"We think it quite impossible to call a day —when the sun is not shining—a fine day," says Miss Barbara.

"We think that when clouds are in the sky there is always a chance of rain; and, when there is a chance of rain, we think it is very extraordinary to say that it is a fine day," adds Miss Charlotte.

My young legal friend starts another topic, and finds his faculty for impromptu definition and his general capacities for arguing, exercised by the three Miss Cruttwells, always in the same useful and stimulating manner. He goes away—as I hope and trust—thinking what an excellent lawyer's wife any one of the three young ladies would make—how she would keep her husband's professional power of disputing everything, constantly in activity—how she would send him into Court every morning bristling at all points with argumentative provocation, even before he put on his wig and gown. And if he could only be present in the spirit, after leaving the abode of the Miss Cruttwells in the body, my young legal friend's admiration of my three disputatious spinsters would, I think, be immensely increased. He would find that, though they could all agree to a miracle in differing with him while he was present, they would begin to vary amazingly, in opinion, the moment their visitor's subjects of conversation were referred to in his absence. He would, probably, for example, hear them take up the topic of the weather, again, the instant the house-door had closed after him, in something like these terms:

"Do you know," he might hear Miss Martha say, "I am not so sure after all, Charlotte, that you were right in saying that it could not be a fine day, because there were clouds in the sky?"

"You only say that," Miss Charlotte would be sure to reply, "because the sun happens to be peeping out, just now, for a minute or two. If it rains in half-an-hour, which is more than likely, who would be right then?"

"On reflection," Miss Barbara might remark, next, "I don't agree with either of you, and I also dispute the opinion of the gentleman who has just left us. It is neither a fine day, nor a bad day."

"But it must be one or the other."

"No, it need'nt. It may be an indifferent day."

"What do you mean by an indifferent day?"

So my three disputatious spinsters would go on, exercising themselves in the art of argument, throughout their hours of domestic privacy, by incessant difference of opinion, and then turning the weapons which they have used against each other while alone, against any common enemy in the shape of an innocent visitor, with the most sisterly unanimity of purpose. I have not presented this sample from my collection, as one which is likely to suit any great number. But, there are peculiarly constituted bachelors in this world; and I like to be able to show that my assortment of spinsters is various enough to warrant me in addressing even the most amazing eccentricities of taste. Perhaps if no legal gentleman will venture on one of the Miss Cruttwells, some of my philosophic friends who lament the absence of the reasoning faculty in women, may be induced to come forward and experience the sensation of agreeable surprise. Is there really no bid for the Disputatious Lot? Not even for the dog-fancying Miss Charlotte, with the two fat puppies thrown in? No? Take away Lot Two, and let us try what we can do with Lot Three.

I confidently anticipate a brisk competition and a ready market for the spinsters now about to be submitted to inspection. All marriageable young gentlemen who believe that fondly-doting daughters and perpetually kissing sisters are sure, when removed from the relatives whom they passionately adore, to make the most devotedly-affectionate wives—all bachelors who believe this, and what coarsest bachelor does not?—are recommended to cluster round me eagerly without a moment's delay. I have already offered a sentimental lot, and a disputatious lot. In now offering a domestic lot, I have but one regret, which is, that my sample on the present occasion is unhappily limited to two spinsters only. I wish I had a dozen to produce of the same interesting texture and unimpeachable quality.

The whole world, gentlemen, at the present writing, means, in the estimation of the two Miss Ducksеys, papa, mama, and brother George. This loving Lot can be warranted never yet to have looked, with so much as half an eye, beyond the sacred precincts of the family circle. All their innocent powers of admiration and appreciation have been hitherto limited within the boundaries of home. If Miss Violet Ducksey wants to see a lovely girl, she looks at Miss Rose Ducksey, and vice versâ; if both want to behold patriarchal dignity, matronly sweetness, and manly beauty, both look immediately at papa, mama, and brother George. I really cannot speak composedly of the delicious and brimming affectionateness of the present Lot. I have been admitted into the unparalleled family circle, of which I now speak. I have

seen—to say nothing, for the present, of papa and mama—I have seen brother George come in from business, and sit down by the fireside, and be welcomed by Miss Violet and Miss Rose (appropriately sweet names for unspeakably sweet creatures) as if he had just returned, after having been reported dead, from the other end of the world. I have seen those two devoted sisters skip emulously across the room in fond contention which should sit first on brother George's knee. I have even seen both sit upon him together, each taking a knee, when he has been half-an-hour later than usual at the office. I have never beheld their lovely arms tired of clasping brother George's neck, never heard their rosy lips cease kissing brother George's cheeks, except when they were otherwise occupied for the moment in calling him "Dear!" On the word of honour of a harmless spinster-fancying old man, I declare that I have seen brother George fondled to such an extent by his sisters that, although a lusty and long-suffering youth, he has fallen asleep under it from sheer exhaustion. Even then, I have observed Miss Rose and Miss Violet contending (in each other's arms) for which should have the privilege of casting her handkerchief over his face. And that graceful strife concluded, I have quitted the house at a late hour, leaving Violet on papa's bosom, and Rose entwined round mamma's waist. Is there not something to fill the eyes with tears, gentlemen, in the contemplation of such scenes as these? Something to pull appealingly at our heartstrings, and not by any means to let go of them again in a hurry?

Am I exaggerating? Go, and judge for yourselves, my bachelor friends. Go, if you like, and meet my domestic lot at a ball.

My bachelor is introduced to Miss Violet, and takes his place with her in a quadrille. He begins a lively conversation, and finds her attention wandering. She has not heard a word that he has been saying, and she interrupts him in the middle of a sentence with a question which has not the slightest relation to anything that he has hitherto offered by way of a remark.

"Have you ever met my sister Rose before?"

"No, I have not had the honour—"

"She is standing there, at the other end, in a blue dress. Now, do tell me, does she not look charming?"

My bachelor makes the necessary answer, and goes on to another subject. Miss Violet's attention wanders again, and she asks another abrupt question.

"What did you think of mamma, when you were introduced to her?"

My bachelor friend makes another necessary answer. Miss Violet, without appearing to be much impressed by it, looks into the distance in search of her maternal parent, and then addresses her partner again:

"It is not a pleasant thing for young people to confess," she says, with the most artless candour, "but I really do think that mamma is the handsomest woman in the room. There she is, taking an ice, next to the old lady with the diamonds. Is she not beautiful? Do you know, when we were dressing to-night, Rose and I begged and prayed her not to wear a cap. We said, 'Don't, mamma; please don't. Put it off for another year.' And mamma said, in her sweet way, 'Nonsense, my loves! I am an old woman. You must accustom yourselves to that idea, and you must let me wear a cap; you must, darlings, indeed.' And we said—what do you think we said?"

(Another necessary answer.)

"We said, 'There is papa. (He was knocking at the door to know if we were ready, just at that moment). You are studying papa's feelings—you are afraid, dear, of being taken for our youngest sister if you go in your hair,—and it is on papa's account that you wear a cap. Sly mamma!' —Have you been introduced to papa?"

Later in the evening my bachelor friend is presented to Miss Rose. He asks for the honour of dancing with her. She inquires if it is for the waltz, and hearing that it is, draws back and curtseys apologetically.

"Thank you, I must keep the waltz for my brother George. My sister and I always keep waltzes for our brother George."

My bachelor draws back. The dance proceeds. He hears a soft voice behind him. It is Miss Violet who is speaking.

"You are a judge of waltzing?" she says, in tones of the gentlest insinuation. "Do pray look at George and Rose. No, thank you: I never dance when George and Rose are waltzing. It is a much greater treat to me to look on. I always look on. I do, indeed."

Perhaps my bachelor does not frequent balls. It is of no consequence. Let him be a diner-out; let him meet my domestic lot at the social board; and he will only witness fresh instances of that all-absorbing interest in each other, which is the praiseworthy and remarkable peculiarity of the whole Ducksey family, and of the young ladies in particular. He will find them admiring one another with the same touching and demonstrative affection over the dishes on the dinner-table, as amid the mazes of the dance. He will hear from the venerable Mr. Ducksey that George never gave him a moment's uneasiness from the hour of his birth. He will hear from Mrs. Ducksey that her one regret in this life is, that she can never be thankful enough for her daughters. And, furthermore (to return to the young ladies, who are the main objects of these remarks), he will find, by some such fragments of dialogue as the following, that no general subjects of conversation whatever, have the power of alluring the minds of the two Miss Ducksey

away from the contemplation of their own domestic interests, and the faithful remembrance of their own particular friends.

It is the interval, let us say, between the removal of the fish and the appearance of the meat. The most amusing man of the company has been talking with great sprightliness and effect, has paused for a moment to collect his ideas before telling one of the good stories for which he is famous, and is just ready to begin, when Miss Rose stops him and silences all her neighbours by anxiously addressing her sister, who sits opposite to her at the table.

"Violet, dear."

"Yes, dear."

(Profound silence. The next course not coming in. Nobody wanting to take any wine. The amusing man sitting back in his chair, dogged and speechless. The hostess nervous. The host smiling uneasily on Miss Rose, who goes on with the happy artlessness of a child, as if nobody but her sister was present.)

"Do you know I have made up my mind what I shall give mamma's Susan when she is married?"

"Not a silk dress? That's my present."

"What do you think, dear, of a locket with our hair in it?"

"Sweet."

(Silence of the tomb. Hostess angry. Host uneasy. Guests looking at each other. No meat. Amusing man suffering from a dry cough. Miss Violet, in her turn, addresses Miss Rose across the table.)

"Rose, I met Ellen Davis to-day."

"Has she heard from Clara Jones?"

"Yes, the Pervincklers are not coming."

"Tiresome people! And the Griggses?"

"If Jane Griggs's cold gets better, she and that odious cousin of hers are sure to come. Uncle Frank, of course, makes his usual excuse."

So the simple-hearted sisters prattle on in public; so do they always carry their own innocent affections and interests about with them into the society they adorn; so do they unconsciously and extinguishingly cast the pure sunshine of their young hearts over the temporary flashes of worldly merriment, and the short-lived blaze of dinner eloquence. I might accumulate further proofs of the characteristic virtues of my domestic lot; but, the effort is surely needless. Without another word of preliminary recommendation, I can confidently submit the Miss Duckseys to what I anticipate will be a remarkably brisk public competition. I can promise the two fortunate youths who may woo and win them, plenty of difficulties in weaning their affections from the family hearth, with showers of tears and poignant bursts of anguish on the wedding day. All properly-constituted bridegrooms, however, feel, as I have been given to understand, inexpressibly comforted and encouraged by a display of violent grief on the part of the bride when she is starting on her wedding tour. And, besides, in the particular case of the Miss Duckseys, there would always be the special resource of taking brother George into the carriage, as a sure palliative, during the first few stages of the honeymoon trip.

Here, for the present at least, I think it desirable to pause before I exhibit any more samples of My Spinsters. If I show too much at a time, of the charming stock-in-trade which it is my privilege to assort, overlook, and dispose of, I risk depreciating the value of my collection of treasures—I throw a suspicion on their variety—I commit the fatal profanation of making them appear easy of access to all the world. Let me, therefore, be content with the cautious proceeding of offering only three lots at a time. Let me reserve for future opportunities my two single ladies, whose charms are matured, my lovely Tomboy, my three travelled Graces, and all my other spinsters not included in the preceding categories, to say nothing of my two prize-widows, who cannot possibly be referred to any category at all. Being a methodical as well as a harmless old gentleman, I think it may be as well to add, before concluding, that I shall require practical encouragement from my young bachelor friends, in the shape of invitations to wedding breakfasts, before I can consent to appear in public again. I make no apology for expressing myself in these decided terms, for I think none is needed. It is clear to me that somebody must keep the torch of Hymen trimmed in our part of the world, or it will be in imminent danger of going out altogether. I trust to have the pleasure of knowing, ere long, that I have made it flame to some purpose by the few words I have benevolently spoken here on the subject of My Spinsters.

SEASIDE EGGS.

Everybody thinks he knows what an egg is; and, after much weary reading in many languages, the inquirer learns that nobody knows all the secrets hidden in an egg. Eggs are the most puzzling things in nature. Eggs become to profoundly curious minds, when once they obtain glimpses of their secrets, the most interesting things in nature. Exploring a forest, or wandering on a sea shore, we stumble over eggs, and in such unlooked-for shapes and unlikely places that there are no other things in the worlds of life which excite half so frequently the question, "What is this?" He is indeed a master of comparative embryology, if such a man exist, who knows all the sorts and shapes of eggs when he sees them. Most people not merely do not know eggs when they see them; they will not believe they are what they are, when told. Nor is this to be wondered at. The study of

eggs is quite a modern branch of knowledge. Little more than two hundred years have elapsed since William Harvey of Folkestone revealed the greatest secrets of nutrition and reproduction, the use of the valves on the circulation of the blood, and the evolution of all animals from eggs.

Many of my seaside readers may kick eggs with their boots, without heeding them, in their strolls upon the sea shore. Ever since they lisped in numbers,

> Twinkle, twinkle little star,
> How I wonder what you are—

they may have thought, if they had the handling of the stars, and could turn them over, toss them about at pleasure to observe them, and dissect them under their microscopes, they would seize the opportunity eagerly. But, few study eggs, although at hand—accessible, plentiful.

I have no call here to plunge into the depths and difficulties of embryology. I am writing for town folks who have temporarily become Coast Folks, and who wish to know what the things are which they find at the seaside. Seeking a mouthful of fresh air, they have not gone to the coast to study ovology, although glad enough, while reddening their blood with oxygen, to cheer their minds with a few fresh ideas. It indeed is one of the wisest fashions of our time which drives town folks to the coast every year to

> "Raze out the written troubles of the brain,"

by photographing upon it pictures of new scenes and strange objects. If I may express myself in the jargon of the Kantian philosophy, objectivity is the remedy for the sorrows of subjectivity. When the mind has become diseased by too much reflection and care, the remedy is to be found in the activity of the observing faculties. A shell, a weed, a fossil, or an egg, can restore an overwrought, or minister to a diseased, mind.

It is annoying to meet with common things frequently of which we are ignorant. This ignorance is indeed a seaside annoyance, and nothing excites it more frequently than the eggs of shell-fish, skates, and sharks. I was once menaced by looks and gestures because I truly told a strong man, in giving a civil answer to a rude question, that the things he held in his hand were eggs. It was upon the beach at Brighton, upon one of those days when Bright Helmstone, the city of the shimmering stones, is seen to most advantage. Until the Brightonians shall have the wisdom to paint their houses green, very bright shiny days will always bring out disagreeably the blinding whiteness of their houses and of their cliffs. When there is too much sun, the lofty mansions, with large windows all staring and glaring from them, of this London upon the sea, look like rows of cockneys drawn up on parade to quiz with their glasses the blushing and beautiful ocean. Brighton is best seen on a day when there is just enough of sun to sprinkle sparkling patches from angular rays here and there over the vast surface of grey green water. I was wandering upon the beach upon such a day, when I observed a tall, powerful man, dressed in black, picking up things left by the tidal waves. On coming near him, he seemed one of those strong men whose muscular system is hardened by working in iron. His comrades were in advance of him, and he was indulging a curiosity more lively than theirs by picking up every strange-looking thing he saw, and examining it attentively prior to throwing it down again. When I looked at him closely, I perceived he was in a state of intense excitement. He held in his hand a light froth-like mass resembling a bit of a wasp's nest, or a collection of little half-inch bladders lighter than wafers.

"What is this?" he asked me in a tone which seemed to say his great eagerness to know, made ceremonial politeness unnecessary, and to intimate to me that I was bound to answer him on pain of displeasing a man stronger than myself, and ready to express his displeasure in the most forcible way.

"It is a collection of eggs," I answered, smiling at him.

His lips moved as if restraining imprecations; and his gestures seemed to tell me he was the stronger man of the two, while he said:

"You are making a fool of me."

"Rub it," I replied, "in your fingers, and you will see the tiny shells of young whelks."

When he had rubbed the froth-like mass against the palm of his left hand, there was a little heap of tiny univalve shells in it. Improving my advantage, I asked him if he knew what a whelk was? and he said, O, yes; he knew whelks, but was very ignorant of the sea, having never seen it before, and having only come down by the excursion train in the morning to return in the evening.

While he spoke, a wave, advancing its thin edge rapidly up the beach, wetted his boots.

"Why," he said, "it has come out farther than any of the others! Does it always do that?"

"It advances to a certain point twice in every twenty-four hours; and the extreme limit of the last tide is marked by those lines of dry seaweed which you see stretched along the coast."

My rough pupil received every little bit of common information I gave him as if it had been a blow, and could not have been more humbled if I had beaten him in a boxing or a wrestling match. On hurrying away with a gruff and hasty salutation, to join his comrades, who were waiting for him, he gave me a look which strangely mingled expressions of shame, gratitude, and vexation. I have

often wondered since what the consequences would have been if this bully of physical force had met a bully of book lore, who would have stunned his ears with Greek and Latin words, and answered his question by saying, "Sir, these are the ova of a gasteropod mollusk, called the buccinum undatum."

The word whelk signifies an animal, hard and rolled with knotty protuberances. The eggs of the whelk are deposited by their mother in deep water. Storms detach the froth-like masses from the rocks; and the progress of the young lives of the whelklings is frequently arrested for ever by their being washed high and dry upon the beach.

Egg-clusters of shell-fish, akin to the whelks, are found in rocky hollows. The kind called purpura is very common. Dozens of them are attached to small stones, by little stalks, and look like tiny egg-cups, with the eggs in them. They are elegant miniature urns. The shell is white and coarse, and is often striped with brown and yellow bands.

The eggs of sea-snails, called Natica, often present themselves. They are little, gristly, hoof-shaped, semi-transparent, and elegant things, finely coated with sand. Eight sided spaces mark the positions of the eggs in the clustre, and the shape of the clusters adapts them for lying flat upon sand, without being imbedded in it.

Storms drive Ianthines ashore upon our coasts. The Ianthines neither crawl nor walk, and seldom swim, having a floating apparatus consisting of a collection of little bladders, which float them upon the surface of the waters. When they choose, they can sink, and moor themselves to the rocks by means of their suckers. In the spawning season they float, and suspend their pendant egg-clusters under their collection of egg-bladders. When the eggs are about to hatch, the cluster is detached from the mantle of the mother, and the young are confided to the guidance of their instincts and the mercy of the waves.

In the months of July and August the seaside rambler will hardly fail to observe upon the rocks or the tangles, or in the rocky pools, small gelatinous masses. They are jelly-like splashes of different shapes and sizes, which will not bear rough handling. Indeed, they look like drippings of soup with globules of oil in them. When examined under a microscope, or a magnifying-glass, or when the globules are advancing towards maturity, the forms of the shells of what are called mollusks and conchifers can be discerned in them. Near the holes of pholades I have often observed these spawn-jellies. Pholas is a Greek word signifying a lurker in a hole; and the species which lurks in ships is called by sailors the shipworm. Rocks, breakwaters, and ships, are destroyed by the pholades, which once threatened to submerge Holland, and which still force builders to bottom ships with copper. Bits of chalk which they have perforated are picked up by gardeners, and tulips are often seen in gardens sprouting through the holes which pholades have bored in marine rocks. The spawn-jellies dissolve and separate when the eggs become larves. The larves swim about actively for some hours, their swimming machinery being little active hairs. During this period, they move about in search of a locality where they may fix themselves for life, like squatters in search of a location. While they have a necessity for moving from place to place, they have a locomotive organisation. When they resolve to settle down in life, the vagrant organs disappear, and the creatures become adapted for a staid residence in an immovable home. Their agility and their little hairs disappear together, and their shells grow into the shapes of augurs or rasps to pierce their holes, while their bodies become living squirts. As the pholas, or the teredo, the piddick, or shipworm, loses the power of swimming, it gains the power of boring. The young teredos are often seen upon bits of floating timber. A little attention is necessary to distinguish between them and the minute worms called serpula.

Long as all the world have been acquainted with the flavour of oysters, the savans have not as yet discovered the secret of their amours. There is a scientific crown still awaiting the man who shall tell us the story of the loves of the oysters. In spring time and summer, when, as the people say, there is not an r in the month, the oysters spawn their gelatinous splashes, which the fishermen call "spat." The spawn looks like drops of tallow or whitish soup. The spat adheres to loose oyster-shells and stones. When examined under a magnifying-glass, there are seen in the spat innumerable little eggs like ill-made pills of a brilliant whiteness. As they change, they become compressed, and approach more and more towards the shape of the oyster. Little hairs appear as the egg-cluster breaks up, and the thousands of the brother and sister ostrea swim off to seek their fortunes. When the steady age comes—I ought rather to say the steady hour—the settling-down epoch, the hairs give place to layers of rough shell, and an oyster of experience establishes himself where he can feed with least risk of serving as food. Microscopists estimate the eggs in a spat by hundreds of thousands. Lewhenhoek counted several hundreds of thousands of eggs in the fecundating folds of the mantle of an oyster-spawner. This marvellous fecundity is necessary to enable the species to survive the ravages which the spawn sustain from their numerous enemies. The spat is a tit-bit for fish, crustaceans, worms, and shell-fish. The feelers, or tentacles of serpules, balanes and polypes, are cast forth continually, and ply unceasingly to devour

young and innocent oysters. When their shells are sufficiently grown to protect them from the nets of these enemies, star-fishes and crabs watch continually for occasions to practise surprisals, and whip the soft and succulent bodies of the ostrea from their valves. Many a five-fingered star-fish loses a finger in the attempt when the oyster is wide awake and closes his valves upon it with a sudden and powerful snap.

Mussels attach their spawn to sea-weeds very early in the spring. They are encountered in thousands upon the most exposed brows of rocks at low water. Spawning in March, their young are as large as split peas in May, and of the size of beans in the month of July. Naturalists admire their cables, and indeed it is a spectacle better than a play to watch rock-mussels at work spinning and fixing their anchoring tackle. The whole progress of the life of a mussel, from the embryon to the adult, and from the spat to the growth of the spawner, is a subject which can be observed easily, and which will abundantly reward observation.

What are called "marine grapes" drift ashore, or float about attached to sea-weeds. Dark-coloured, round-shaped bags, coiled around sea-weeds by fleshy twining stalks, their popular name well describes their general appearance. The marine grapes are the egg-clusters of cuttle-fishes. Cuvier and his school class the cuttle-fishes with the ianthines and natica, mussels and oysters, because their nervous system is, he thinks, arranged on the same plan and placed under the digestive canal. The name of mollusks, from mollis (soft), is given to a great number of species which the Greeks called conchylions, because they had hard shells. Marine grapes are very different looking egg-clusters from the spat of oysters, pholades and mussels, and, indeed, they are not very like the floating clusters of whelks and ianthines. At the point of each of these leathery eggs is a nipple, through which, when come to maturity, the young cuttle-fish emerges into society. Cuvier brings together in his great embranchment mollusca, the kraken, and the periwinkle; and the octopus of Lamarck, whose eight arms can embrace a boat or drown a man, is made of kind, if not of kin, with the agreeable conchylion, which we wind out of his shell with a pin.

Egg-shells of ray-fish and sharks are very frequently found upon the sea-shore. On some parts of the coast, the shells of the ray-fish are called hand-barrows. Indeed, they look like little four-handle hand-barrows four or five inches long and an inch and a half broad. They are of a dark brown colour and a hard horny or leathery substance. The shells are most frequently found empty, but sometimes in the spring and early summer specimens are obtained with the young sharks in them. Observers admire the coil of their long tails. Another name for these eggs is mermaid purses. Poetical superstition, supposing seals to be women of the sea, could not let them be without money, any more than the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters, and these egg-clusters are, of course, their portemonnaies.

Being destitute of a spinal marrow, the whelk and the cuttle-fish are deprived of the suite of boxes to hold it, called vertebræ. Skate and sharks have spinal marrows and vertebræ, the contents and the boxes. Geoffroy St. Hilaire has remarked, that the difference is less than it looks, the shell-fish having boxes which contain all their soft parts, among which their nerves are distributed. The vertebrated animals have boxes to protect their spinal marrow only, while the conchylions have boxes to protect completely the whole of their soft organs. The colour of the eggs of the sharks is not brownish but yellowish. A long tendril issues from each of the four handles of the hand-barrows of the sharks, and hangs from it curlingly. Coast Folk use them as barometers. When there is a moisture in the air they become straight, and when the atmosphere is very hot and dry they curl up crisply.

Such are the most common of the sea-side eggs. My object has not been to talk about wonders, but vulgar things, and avoiding the marvels which a little trouble can find, to describe sufficiently for recognition some objects which obtrude themselves upon everybody's notice.

A few words to help young observers to recognise eggs when they find them. An egg is a succession of envelopes in envelopes. An egg is a series of bags incased in each other without seams and without apertures. Puzzles of ships in bottles or flies in amber are nothing to the puzzles how these envelopes come to enwrap each other. In a hen's egg there are eight or nine of these sacks in sacks, but I shall notice the principal which belong to eggs in general:

1. The skin, called in Greek the chorion. The chief function of this wrapper, is the protection of its contents. It is the sack of the sacks.

2. The provision-sack, which is called in Latin the vitellus. This bag contains the nutriment or yolk.

3. The germ, the contents of which burst and pass into what the French embryologists call the disque prolifère. Thus, three great physiological facts are represented in an egg, —protection, nutrition, and fecundation. In other words, in every complete egg there are the envelope and the yolk, and, in the yolk, the germinative vesicule and the germinative spot, which are both little transparent globules. In the globules is the life.

Dull, indeed, of soul must the man be in whom an egg does not inspire emotions of awe and admiration, wonder and worship. The circle of life is from the egg to the adult, and from the

adult to the egg. This is the vital round; the beginning and the ending, the ending and the beginning. The wheel goes round continually, life kindling sparks of life; and what is called death, is the worn-out forms becoming cold and decaying away.

CHIP.

A COLONIAL PATRIOT.

THE following interesting scrap from Melbourne, addressed to the conductor of this journal, bears reference to two articles which appeared in the twelfth volume:—

"I pray you to pardon this liberty; but I could not refrain from thanking you for the very favourable manner in which my conduct has been reported in your journal for last December, headed Old and New Squatters.

Unknown to you, but through Mr. Arnold, bookseller here, I have had your Household Words and Narratives from the very first, and also almost all your published works, though I left England on the twenty-fifth of April, eighteen hundred and three, in the Calcutta, to found the colony of Port Philip, Bass Straits, and was removed to the present Hobart Town in February, eighteen hundred and four, yet my affection for the fatherland has caused me to expend what means I could afford in purchasing the works of the best authors, and also some of the periodicals. From eighteen hundred and twenty-eight to the ruinous year eighteen hundred and forty-three, I imported for my use—through the house of Brookes, merchant, London—six newspapers, six magazines, three quarterlies, three annuals, and generally made up fifty pounds a-year for books.

In eighteen hundred and forty-three, I was deprived of all my thirty years' labours, and had to begin the world again. Victoria—before the gold days—was a wonderful country. In five years and a-half—beginning with March, eighteen hundred and forty-eight—I had secured another small fortune. I am fond of books and paintings and engravings. I have, in this out-of-the-way part of the world, a library of near four thousand volumes. In eighteen hundred and fifty-three, I expended about one hundred and seventy pounds for books with the house of H. G. Bohn, and yet expend about fifty pound a-year with Mr. Arnold of Melbourne. To the Art Union of London I have remitted sixty-three guineas—fifty of which were remitted in eighteen hundred and fifty-four for five shares for each of the next ten years—in one sum of fifty guineas. It was mentioned in their catalogue, but not my name.

Victoria, before the gold days, remitted largely to the mother-country for books, newspapers, periodicals, and music, also for paintings and engravings. We—that is the bulk of the Englishmen resident here—love the old island that, scarcely raising her head from the ocean that cabins her shore, has spread, with her handful of freemen, an empire such as earth never witnessed before. This colony is one proof of the above; founded by freemen, without any aid from the British or colonial government, it had gone on rapidly, healthfully, and with much comfort. Independence was the rule, poverty the exception (and that generally caused by the foul spot of the colonists—drunkenness); but, with the discovery of gold we were inundated with people many of whom were utterly unfit for labour of any kind. I believe that these people thought that they could pick up gold in the streets or the forests without labour.

We have had many changes—some have risen high; some, after making princely fortunes, have speculated and lost all. Misery and want have visited us; but now, thank God! all seem going on well. We of the legislative council have checked the reckless expenditure of the rulers, and now we are all employed.

I hope you will excuse this letter; I have often wished I dared write to you; your tales and essays have beguiled many an hour of my life, and I am thus in your debt. I was much pleased with your favourable notice of me, and, to add to it, the Argus (the Thunderer of Victoria and Australasia), just as your number for December arrived, was pleased to praise me even more than I do deserve. You will thus see that your or your contributor's article was not at variance with the feeling of the colonists here. On that point I have sent by this post the newspaper of date Wednesday, the sixteenth of April, eighteen hundred and fifty-six.

Wishing you many years of healthful employment in the highly useful manner you have been so long engaged, I am, dear sir, One that would like to call myself your friend."

HAWKSWELL PLACE.

PART FIRST.

I.

With greyly-pencill'd clouds the twilight creeps
Silent along the slope of purple wold,
Upon whose brow a ling'ring sun-touch sleeps,
Like eye of faded love caressing cold.
Wreaths of white mist, noiseless as spirits, rise
From the deep hollows of the autumn hills,
Steal ghastly up, as day-light slowly dies
Hov'ring on skirts of woods and haunting rills;
Hanging in mystery over darkling pools,
Which hidden lurk in wild, lone, moorland spots;
Winding about midst stilly wooded knolls
Where the mass'd, fallen foliage, lies and rots;
Drooping unwelcome over cottage eaves,
Or gliding, ghost-like, round the church-yard graves;
Melting in noisome dews on russet leaves,
Shrouding the night in their soft, fleecy waves.

II.

From out the dark, bronzed shade of ancient woods,
Peer gables, moss'd with lichens grey and hoar;

With rose and ivy tangles, wreathed in floods,
Are mullion'd windows quaintly draperied o'er.
In the deep porch the lurking winds lie mute,
Death's silence guards the broken, latchless door;
The weed-grown pathways echo to no foot—
To one swift foot shall echo never more!
Yet, always through the dim and murky night,
When darkness comes with neither moon nor star,
Shoots out into the mist a glowing light
From one low window, shining straight and far:
A light of cheery fire, of sparkling brand,
High piled upon the hearthstone's ample space;
No cot, no hall, no palace in the land
Shows ever brighter hearth than Hawkswell Place.

III.

One ancient room still wears a look of home—
A look of home some fifty years ago;
You half expect to see the master come,
And sit him down to rest, all tired and low.
Old pictures smile familiar from the wall,
Old books upon old tables dusty lie;
Rich, faded curtains, on dim carpets fall,
The antique chairs are stiff, and worn, and high.
The leaping flames the ruddy wainscot fill,
Above the mantel, towers a broken glass;
All is so hushed—so coldly, deadly still,
That almost you could hear a shadow pass.

IV.

With dreamy eye, but heart and ear awake,
Dame Avice sits beside the glowing brands;
She prays, then lists, then prays for his dear sake,
Who wanders far away in unknown lands.
Thus has she watched for thirty years and more;
Stiff eld has come upon her, all unheard;
She wearies not, though oft her heart is sore:
Despairs not, though her hope is long deferred.

V.

Hoar-finger'd Ruin crumbles wall and gate;
Windows are dark with matted leaves and flowers;
The spider weaves her web in rooms of state;
The unroof'd hall stands wide to heaven's showers.
But this was *his*, and he may come again
Without a warning word—come as he went;
There, through long years, his favourite books have lain,
There Avice waits, her faith and hope unspent.
Dimly the pictures of old times return,
Freighted with sorrow, wash'd and worn with tears;
And yet, in tracing them, her heart will burn,
Forgotten all that chilling waste of years.
Her master's gentle tone, his grave sad face,
His quiet student ways and dreamy air,
His lustrous eyes—those eyes like all his race—
So beautiful, yet thunder-fraught with care.
These shine upon her still from out their frame,
Tender and kind; but she remembers well
A moment when they flash'd with lightning flame;
Then, o'er them darkness, like a curtain, fell.

PART SECOND.

I.

In the dim rooms a strange fresh voice went singing,
And he would sit and listen in his chair,
While ev'ry pulse in his proud heart was ringing
To that sweet tone an echo of despair.
A sunny face would come with wild, shy smile,
To beckon Cousin Percie out to play;
And though his strong heart writhed and burn'd the while,
He would be firm, and frown that face away.
A soft white arm oft round his neck would coil,
No clasp of serpent deadlier in its might;
He put it off, and sought, in night-long toil,
To quench his passion's loved yet fearful light.
If her bright perfumed hair but touched his cheek,
It burnt in pain for many a tortured hour;
If her small rosy lips a kiss did seek,
His soul was melted by their wondrous power.
Melted, and weak, and wav'ring for a day,
Mad-happy with wild hopes and wilder dreams,
'Till with the purple tinge of swift decay,
One deadly thought swept off their roseate beams.

II.

Half-child, half-woman, vain, as women are,
Yet tender, loving, passionate, and proud;
To him an angel, gracious, kind, and fair,
At whose bright feet his heart unwilling bow'd.
The little hands that once would blind his eyes,
The mimic voice that bade him guess who pass'd,
Teased him no more; instead, a blush would rise:
The friendly time was gone—she loved at last.

III.

Counsel he took within his stern, closed heart,
Most bitter counsel in the night's dead hour;
"We love—we love; for this we two must part:
The curse is on us both—it yet may lour!
O God, my God! Thou givest me strength to bear
This heavy, burning cross, through my dark life,
Shelter Thou Lilian from all earthly care,
Keep her aloof from anguish and from strife!
My heritage—a heritage of sorrow—
Never will I bequeath to son of mine,—
To tremble daily for the dread to-morrow,
'Till lost is reason—all of man divine.
From Thee I ask but patience, O my God!
Patience to live my span of sunless days,
Calmly to look beyond the lifted rod,
While I thread out the rest of this dark maze!"

IV.

A summer night it was when he departed,
Moonlight and starlight, hush'd as death or sleep;
Still firm and true, he went, though broken-hearted,
Yet not too proud or firm at last to weep.
Dame Avice saw her master near the limes,
Looking up skyward, with uncover'd head,
As if he pray'd, or listen'd to soft chimes,
Or wavelets trickling o'er a stony bed.

V.

In that dim hour he listen'd to his heart,
To fond warm pleadings far more sweet than bells,
Or voice of many waters when they part
With foamy Naiads in their sparkling cells.
Listen'd and linger'd till temptation grew
Almost too strong for his quick, conscious soul;
Sweet Passion round his heart her trammels threw,
Urging submission to her soft control.

VI.

On him his race's curse might never fall;
Was not his reason strong, his spirit clear?
Why put away Life's dearest charm of all,
For such a vague, uncertain, distant fear?

VII.

"Be strong to suffer, be not weak to sin,"
Whisper'd God's warner in his shrinking ear;
Be strong, and overcome! If Passion win,
Peace shall pass from thee, leaving with thee Fear—

A chill dim spectre—ever at thy side,
With outspread frozen wings 'twixt thee and Heaven,
A shadow of the grave, an ebbing tide,
Thy heart upon it from the Life-shore driven."

VIII.

"Lilian, sweet Lilian, wake from out thy dream!
Wake, Lilian!" sigh'd the night-wind 'gainst the pane;
"O, Lilian! say farewell!" The white moonbeam
Crept to her eyes, and kiss'd them once again.
A wavering smile toy'd on her parted lips,
While Percie's name stole from them, dreamy low,
Like zephyr playing on the daisy-tips,
When falls the rain-dew, silent, soft, and slow.
"O, Lilian, he is gone!" The winds made moan,
All mournfully, against the window-pane.
"Sweet Lilian, wake and weep, for he is gone—
Percie is gone—is gone—nor comes again!"

PART THIRD.

I.

Up rose the dawn, with sunshine on the wold,
With hymns of birds and incense-breath of flowers;
The shadows fled into the forests old,
And opening buds look'd up for dewy showers.
The summer slaked his thirst in the swift rill,
The breezes bid away in shady nooks,
The mavis sang one wild continuous trill,
And white-eyed pebbles peer'd from out the brooks.

II.

The ruby light woke Lilian with a kiss,
Then nestled in her waves of silken hair;
Stole to her bosom like a soft caress,
Then changed to rosy snow, and linger'd there.
Draped in her maiden purity, she lay
Radiant as early summer, fresh as spring,
Half-sleeping, half-awake, with thoughts astray,
In dream-land wand'ring still, on pure white wing.
But the vague, beauteous vision of the night
Faded so fast, her heart could scarce pursue;
Vainly she strove to stay its wavering light,
It died away in formless shadowy hue.

III.

Then rose she up with sudden smile and sigh,
And let the sun in on her morning prayer;
The moted raylets, floating noiseless by,
Were fain to stay and make a halo there.
Forth from her chamber-door she slowly went,
Ling'ring from step to step in trancèd calm;
Up from the open porch, with odours blent,
Flew the fresh air with morning kiss of balm,
To ope the blushing rose upon her cheek,
The lustrous beauty of her eyes to light,
To give her sweet Good-morrow! and to deck
Her lips with smiles of gracious, loving might.

IV.

Her little foot paused not, nor slack'd its pace,
As on she went to Cousin Percie's room,
A moment's kindling blush dawn'd on her face,
To fade as fast before the chamber's gloom.
The curtains hung adown upon the floor,
And o'er the windows, shutting out the morn,
And, though the sunbeams red, rush'd by the door,
Still it look'd dim, forsaken, and forlorn.
A little while she waited in the porch,
And listen'd for his step with ear intent;
Then through the sunshine, yet too pale to scorch,
Along the garden-paths her ways she bent.
And as she sometimes linger'd, and then ran,
Still "Percie, Cousin Percie!" was her cry;
"Where are you, Percie?" Then her pulse began
To beat a little faster, and her eye
Ranged o'er the tangled woods, where echoes lay,
And answer'd her with distant mocking tone:
"Lilian, sweet Lilian, he is far away!
Lilian, bright Lilian, where is Percie gone?"

V.

They sought him far and near, in wood, on wold,
'Neath the black tarn that lurks within the hill;
Yet vainly sought. The keen autumnal cold—
Yule's frosts were come, but Percie came not still.
Then Lilian, losing hope, grew wan and weak,
And faded like a snow-wreath in the sun;
Her morning eyes were dim, white was her cheek,
Wasted her youth ere it was well begun.
Dame Avice spoke to cheer her, "He will come;
Be of good cheer, O Lilian dear," said she;
But Lilian answer'd sadly, "Though he come,
It is too late—he will not come to me."

VI.

And Lilian truly spake; for, ere the spring
Merged into summer over Hawkswell Chace,
Across the shadow'd hills there thrill'd the ring
Of passing bells for one at Hawkswell Place.
For fairy Lilian, dying in her prime,
As die the violets ere the rose is blown;
For angel Lilian rang that gathering chime
With a low, sad rebuke, in its deep tone.

PART THE LAST.

I.

The snow lay deep upon the open Chace,
The sky above was murk, and dull, and drear;
The winter winds were out on their mad race,
Driving the clouds along like hunted deer.
In the church-tower were clanging Christmas-bells,
Mingling their carol with the loud free breeze,
Which bore their echoes far o'er the bleak fells,
Then left them sighing midst the tall bare trees.

II.

Twilight was past, and darkness had come down
O'er Hawkswell Place, in a thick starless veil;
Dame Avice sat beside the fire alone,
Watching and waiting, silent, grey, and pale.
The ancient room was full of fragrant heat,
From Yule-tide logs upon the hearth piled high;
Stood in their ruddy glow their master's seat,
With Christmas cheer upon the table nigh.
Old wine of ruby lustre, clear as light,
Waited his lip to drain its sparkling tide;
While sconcèd walls, with garlands gay bedight,
Shone mocking down, the stillness to deride;
For, they were deck'd, as if for Christmas guests,
With wreaths of bright-gemm'd holly twined about;
Above the mantel, pictures, and old chests,
Which shone and glitter'd as the blaze flamed out.

III.

The night sped on, the long, long Christmas night,
The bells were still, the wild wind wilder grew;
Bow'd the great oaks before its steady might,
Shiver'd the elms, and groan'd the darksome yew.

Lower and lower fell the dying flame,
Midst the white ashes on the broad hearthstone;
The quivering shadows swiftly went and came,
The silver sconces darken'd one by one.

IV.

O! faded, watchful, honest, hoping eye,
Look out into the waste of blank white snow,
Where windy shadows of the night sweep by,
With soundless, trackless step, and moaning low!
O! stretch'd and starting ear, get thee to rest!
Morning is coming from the cloudy east;
The Yule-tide fire is out, thy prayer unblest,
Untouch'd, untasted, stands the Yule-tide feast.
O! weary vigil, kept with floods of tears!
O! faithful heart! O! eager, aching heart,
Weariest thou not with all those waiting years?
Yearnest thou not to rest thee and depart?

V.

"Not yet, not yet, a little longer space;
A few more hours, a few more months of pain;
Sooner or later I shall see his face,
It is a weary watch, but not in vain!"

VI.

"Listen! a muffled foot upon the snow,
A heavy tread across the empty hall!
My master! O! my master, is it thou?"
Cried Avice, with a wild and joyous call.

VII.

Bronzed was his face and iron-grey his hair,
His eyes were dim with thick unfallen tears;
Deep-furrow'd was his brow with pain and care,
Stamp'd with the woe of many hopeless years.
He sat him down in his accustom'd place.
"O! master, welcome, welcome to thy home!"
Cried Avice, gazing on his stern dark face.
"I thank thee, Avice. Quick, bid Lilian come!"

VIII.

"Lilian, my master! Lilian is not here,
Low lieth she beneath the churchyard sod;
Silent her loving heart, and deaf her ear,
Her body dust, her pure soul gone to God!"

IX.

No word spake he, but from his breath a groan,
The pent-up agony of his dark life,
Burst, with the thrill of heartbreak in its tone,
Then ceased for aye his time of earthly strife.
They buried him at Angel Lilian's feet,
At twilight, on the closing year's last day.
Through the hoar moss you read the legend yet,
"Here lyeth Lilian Leigh and Percie Grey."

SLAVES AND THEIR MASTERS.

The slave-owners of the Southern States of America thoroughly understand that their system is passing through a crisis. Some hope to tide over the danger of reform, and to rivet the old chains tighter than ever by violently severing the Union; others, of a better sort, are ready to adopt any course of action which shall be at once practical and just; which shall not, for sake of an ethical right, inflict a social wrong, and which does not found its humanity to the one side, on cruelty to the other. This is precisely the problem so difficult to solve. If Jefferson's plan had been adopted when proposed, there would have been no slaves now to vex the politics and undermine the prosperity of the Southern States. His wish was, that all negroes born after the passing of a certain law, should be declared free; that they should remain with their parents until of a certain age, that then they should be brought up at the public expense to tillage, arts, or sciences, according to their geniuses, till the females should be eighteen, and the males twenty-one years of age, when they should be colonised to such place as the circumstances of the time should render most proper, sending them out with implements of household and the handicraft arts; that they should then be declared to be a free and independent people; that protection and assistance should be afforded them until they had acquired strength; and that, at the same time, an equal number of white people, from other parts of the world, should be induced, by proper encouragements, to migrate into Virginia. If the slave-owners would consent to this, slavery would die gradually and gently, without causing a social earthquake and without inflicting a class wrong. This was Jefferson's scheme; and this is still the only practicable-looking theory set forth by the more moderate abolitionists.

Indeed, in the imperial city of Washington, slavery is gradually decreasing by its own natural retrocession before free labour. So much so, that people are speculating on the time when it shall be demanded of the general government to incorporate Washington among the Free States, by the constant immigration of free white labour; which is cheaper and more efficient than that of the enslaved black. There are, already, more Irish and German labourers than slaves in Washington: and their numbers increase yearly. The majority of servants are free negroes, this class constituting one-fifth of the population: the slaves being one-fifteenth. The negroes of Washington are often persons of great intellectual development: but they are not generously dealt with, even in Washington. In April last year, "twenty-four genteel coloured men," so described in the Police Report, were arrested on the charge of meeting together in a private house on secret business: the law forbidding all gatherings whatsoever of the coloured population, not overlooked by one white man, at the least. On being searched, a bible, a volume of Seneca's Morals, Life in Earnest, the printed constitution of a "Society to relieve the sick and bury the dead," together with a subscription paper to "purchase the freedom of Eliza Howard," whom her owner was willing to sell for six hundred and fifty dollars, were found

upon them. The object of their meeting did not protect them. One of the prisoners, a slave, by name Joseph James, was flogged; four others, free men, were sent to the workhouse; and the remainder were set free, on payment of costs, fines, &c., amounting in all to one hundred and eleven dollars. Mr. Olmsted truly says, if such a thing had happened in Naples, or any other despotic kingdom, what an outcry there would have been! But in democratic America, no one cared for this flagrant breach of justice and humanity to twenty-four genteel coloured men.

Of course in different states in the South, slaves are treated differently; but, before these differences are pointed out, it will be well to consider what the fundamental relations subsisting between master and slave are. The first doctrine is, that a slave—whether he be a negro or American Indian or other bondman—is a chattel: owned upon the same conditions as, in other countries, a farmer owns his cattle. A Mr. Gholson, a member of the Virginian Legislature, stated the whole case, when, in answer to a proposal for the manumission of slaves, he sneeringly exclaimed: "Why, I really have been under the impression that I owned my slaves! I lately purchased four women and ten children, in whom I thought I had obtained a great bargain; for I really supposed they were as much my property as were my brood mares." When Mr. Adams brought before the House of Representatives a petition signed by a certain number of slaves, Mr. Wise declared that the right of petition belonged only to the people of the Union. Slaves are not people in the eye of the law, he added. They have no legal personality. Another gentleman declared that slaves had no more right to be heard than so many horses and dogs. The result was, that, overborne by southern slave-holding votes, the supreme representatives of the great republic passed by a large majority (on the eleventh of February, eighteen hundred and thirty-seven) this resolution:—Resolved, that *slaves* do not possess the right of petitioning secured to the *people* of the United States by the constitution.

In obedience to this dictum, which banishes the image of the Almighty from the human family, a "man and a brother" may, in the slave-holding states of America, not only be bought, sold, and mortgaged, seized for his master's debts, and transmitted by inheritance or will, but, being property, can possess of himself no property whatever. The members of his body, even, are not his own. The Natchez Free Trader, of the twelfth of February, eighteen hundred and thirty-eight, published the following advertisement:—

FOUND.—A negro's head was picked up on the railroad yesterday, which the owner can have by calling at this office, or paying for this advertisement.

The head may have been of use to the master of the victim as evidence in establishing a claim against the railway company for the destruction of his *property*.

Slaves cannot make any contract; even marriage is no more a solemnity nor a bond among them, than parentage is amongst the lower animals. "The association which takes place amongst slaves, and is called marriage, being properly designated *contubernium*, is a relation which has no sanctity, and to which no civil rights are attached."* Their offspring is the property of their masters, as foals and calves would be. Therefore the slave has no marital rights; no parental rights; no family rights; no educational rights. He has no sort of redress against his master; because, being a chattel or article of property, he cannot be legally injured by his master; who may feed or famish him; keep him clothed or unclothed; houseless or housed, at his own convenience or pleasure; and, if he prove refractory, he may kill him with impunity. His relations to the state are of the same character. A slave cannot be a party to a civil suit. His testimony is rejected in the law courts. Not only may his master always forbid his being educated and receiving religious instruction, but the government steps in with direct prohibitions of its own. Emancipation is obstructed by all kinds of obstructions, and the constitutions of some states actually forbid the abolition of slavery.

The law is, however, in some states, relaxed in the slave's favour. The negroes of Virginia, the "Ole Virginny" of their affections, stand high in the scale of treatment. Of all the slave states—excepting only Louisiana — Virginia is the one which treats her slaves with the most consideration, and comes nearest to respecting the rights of humanity in them. Poorly enough, even at the best; but still more liberally than the rest. Virginia slaves have "educational privileges;" they have preachers of their own, right smart ones, too; although the law against their assembling together extends even to their religious worship, which in the cities, a white man generally conducts in churches specially set apart, while in the country the black service comes after the white—still they have black preachers, slaves like the rest, devout and gifted; and they have a great deal of spending-money, obtained by working over hours; but which, since religious bigotry has put down innocent amusements, is generally spent in frivolity, or debauchery. Some of them dress more expensively than the wealthy whites, though the wealthy whites of Virginia are invariably full-dressed at breakfast, with silks and satins, and gay dinner costume sweeping down the muddy streets at eleven in the morning—still, in spite of this excess, the

* Stroud's Sketch of the Slave Laws, sixty-first page.

negro exquisite outshines the white. The newspapers of Virginia are beginning to complain of "insolence and insubordination" among the negroes, owing, they say, to the undue privileges granted by their masters, and to their over-familiarity with them. But this complaint does not seem very well founded; for one seldom hears of any instance of resistance or self-assertion among the most favoured blacks.

Mr. Olmsted* followed a negro-funeral out of Richmond, the capital of Virginia. A hearse drawn by two horses; six hackney-coaches following; "six well-dressed men mounted on handsome saddle-horses, and riding them well," in the rear of them; and twenty or thirty women walking on the causeway. Among them all not a single white person. When they came to the burial-place they found the interment of a child almost at an end. The new-comers set down their coffin and joined in the labours of the preceding party, until the little grave was filled in and moulded over. When this was completed, one of those who had been handling a spade sighed deeply, and fervently offering up a pious ejaculation, exclaimed, in the same breath, Now—you, Jim—you! see yar; you jis lay dat yar shovel cross dat grave—so fash—dar, yes; dat's right." The coffin, which had been placed on the tools, as on trestles, was lowered, and the funeral began. One of the men stepped to the head of the grave, and holding up a handkerchief, as if it were a book, pronounced a short exhortation, as if he were reading from it. But it was genuine and touching, notwithstanding certain grammatical lapses; and free, though overlooked, for form's sake, by a police-officer.

Slave-labour—Chattelhood—revenges itself on its employers in the negligence and stupidity with which it is performed. So widely different to the labour of even the least energetic or industrious free man—white or black—who works for himself, and whose zeal or laxity reacts only on his own destiny. The free negro works with a very different will to the slave; and the slave puts an energy and a power into his "overtime" labour (which is allowed in some of the slave states) which no amount of coaxing or flogging can get him to put into his master's. Valuable horses starved and neglected; new tools wilfully broken, and no persuasion sufficient to introduce anything lighter or more convenient than the clumsy old hoe, which is made to do every kind of work; the most entire want of forethought, care, management, economy, and reliableness—in short, of every virtue usually looked for in a labourer—these are the characteristics of slave labour. A negro, oiling the wheels of a railway-train, will hold his can so that a stream of oil, costing perhaps a dollar and a-half a gallon, will be wasted on the ground the whole length of the train. Post-horses left to the care of negroes will be neither groomed nor fed, and are more likely to die of hunger than not. Large fires will be recklessly made on the floor of a wooden hut, and very often a whole range of cabins will be burnt down. Negroes will carry heavy weights the entire round of a field, where even an Irishman would cut across the corner, and take one step for their hundred. But nothing could make the negro to do this if he has been accustomed to go round the field; plodding slowly in single file, and losing hours over the work of minutes. Nothing can exceed his attachment to old habits; unless it be the intense stupidity with which he clings to them. Yet, masters, more stupid perhaps, dread their slaves becoming too smart; because this begets in them a habit of taking care of themselves; which, once fairly established, will, they believe, destroy the very life of slavery. The problem with the Southern planters is, how to make his negro a good labourer without letting him become so clever and so self-reliant as to be able to take care of himself. At present, so rare are the instances of profitable self-care among the negroes, that the slaves of aristocratic families think themselves a great deal better off than the free negroes; "dirty free niggers got nobody to take care of 'em!" they say, contemptuously, when exulting in their own fine clothes, good food, and wealth of spending money. It is one of the worst vices and most demoralising characteristics of slavery to honour and love its condition. As a body, slaves desire to be free; and often talk of the time when they shall gain their liberty; and they are restless; and the better educated among them full of hope or of discontent, according to their temperaments; but the pampered house-slave is generally content with his condition.

If it could be proved that slavery does not pay, the slave question would soon be settled; and what Mr. Olmsted saw on a free-labour farm in Virginia goes some way to prove that slavery is not an economical kind of service. The owner was an abolitionist and freed his slaves, from political and religious motives. Since then he had employed free men, and had found their labour cheaper and more efficient than that of slaves; cheaper, because of the high price of slaves now in Virginia, and more efficient, because done with energy and intelligence; qualities only to be found in labour that has a direct influence on the labourer. The slaves who had been freed, and who had gone chiefly to Africa, had succeeded very well. Some had attained wealth, and almost all were prospering both in morals and condition. But, said this abolitionist, the negroes in America are all of a higher character than the native African. There has been so much intermixture of white blood that very few are "full

* A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; with Remarks on their Economy. By Frederic Law Olmsted.

blooded" now, and consequently have gained some of the intellectual development of the race mingled with their own. Deaths, old age, sickness, sulks, taking to the swamp, theft — often of most valuable property, many dollars' worth, to sell to a chicken-trader (a dealer in stolen goods) for a dram—all these casualties lessen materially the wealth of a slave-owner. And all these are chances which the employer of free labour does not run. Children are the great sources of a slave owner's wealth. One man calculated his at, "every nigger-baby worth two hundred dollars the instant it drew breath." There does not seem to be much difficulty in rearing them, at least, not in Virginia, the nursery of the slave states. Slave-women are not chosen nor esteemed so much for their working qualities as for their health, strength, symmetry, and aptness of maternity. A woman with children is worth one-sixth or one-fourth more than one without. But, in spite of all this care, the slave-population is yearly on the decrease, and slaves are becoming more expensive as labourers. When once free-labour can be proved to be cheaper and more productive than slave-labour, the question of emancipation, going then to the depth of the pocket, will approach nearer a solution than all the preachings of philanthropists could hope to effect.

Down in the swamp, where slaves are employed as lumbermen on wages, instances of sulkiness, or rascality, are very rare. The men's manners are changed. Frank, manly, straightforward, they lose all the cringing servility or the downcast sullenness of the plantation slaves. Neither overseer nor driving is needed. The stimulus of partial freedom is sufficient to awaken energies and ambition which slavery crushes to the dust. Among the swamp lumbermen, forethought, industry, and economy, are general; all because they are quasi freemen, and their conduct reacts on their destiny. They answer somewhat to the serfs à l'abrok of Russia: each having to pay a certain sum to his master, keeping the remainder of his wages to himself. It is strange how, with such examples before their eyes—and others yet more striking of emancipated negroes amassing large fortunes and obtaining high social positions—the partisans of slavery dare still persist in declaring that a negro left to himself, would starve for very laziness. Advocates of the like doctrine at home should examine personally the effects of freedom on the character of a slave, before they countenance the monstrous untruth, that it is by God's ordinance that one race of a lower type of organisation is made the slave of another, higher; or that the earth and the good of humanity demand labour which this lower type will not give of free-will. A negro with freedom and education will have artificial wants, like other men; and will labour, like others, to gratify them.

These swamps are near the Dismal Swamps where runaway slaves hide, to be famished, hunted out, or shot, as the case may be. "But some on 'em would rather be shot than took," said a negro, simply, speaking of the runaways. When asked how they were distinguished from the lumbermen, if met by chance, the negro answered, "It was very easy: they were strange and skeered, and not decent" (starved, frightened, and badly-clothed). What a volume in these three words!

A certain Dr. Cartwright has written on negroes and their diseases. Amongst others, he particularises one as drapetomania, a malady like that which cats are liable to, manifested by an unrestrainable propensity to run away. His symptoms are sulk and dissatisfaction; his remedy—the lash. Another disease, under the learned head of dysæsthesia, hebetude of mind, and obtuse sensibility of body, vulgarly called rascality, is also put down as a negro ailment. But for this, and its sequence, negro consumption, a disease unknown to the medical men of the Northern United States and of Europe, he recommends care and kindness, and the removal of the original cause of the dissatisfaction and trouble. Mr. Olmsted speaks of the well-known malady nostalgia, and observes that Dr. Cartwright's last piece of advice is very suggestive. It must not be thought that there is the slightest ridicule or conscious quackery in this pseudo-pathology. It is put forth as genuine science dealing with recognised forms of disease.

Virginian out-of-sight life and byeway travelling are none of the smartest. But Virginia is a model of care and correctness compared to other states. Farther towards the south, where slavery has a darker skin and wears a heavier chain than in Washington and Virginia, the necessary consequence of unthrift and neglect become very glaring. In North and South Carolina whatever is decently done is done by a northman; the natives themselves can do nothing but raise rice and grow cotton. The white men here are very religious; talking scripturally, and undergoing spiritual experiences with tremendous activity. But they flog their slaves, and sell the child from under the mother's hand; break marriage-vows, and disregard maidenly virtue. A barkeeper sells his stock in trade and goodwill, and sets out with the following advertisement:

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD.

In order to engage in a more honourable business, I offer for sale, cheap for cash, my stock of Liquors, Bar Fixtures, Billiard Table, &c. &c. If not sold privately, by the twentieth day of May, I will sell the same at public auction. "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

E. KEYSER.

That bar-keeper would probably have sold his own child and its slave mother at a dollar profit, and have thought himself justified in so doing. Indeed, one of the most horrible features in this most horrible traffic is the fact that fathers sell their children, and brothers their brothers, without thought or care; that fathers and brothers do worse than sell to another master their daughters and sisters; that all natural duties are violated, and all natural boundaries overpassed. In no other country, and under no other condition of slavery, have such things been done before. In Mohammedan slavery, natural ties are respected as sacredly as the most perfectly legal ties, and the moralities of society are regarded and enforced from bond as well as from free. But in America, the slave has no morality to regard. He has no nature in common with the rest of humanity; he is ranked with beasts of toil and burthen, and his life is modelled on theirs under the necessary modifications of his human nature. He has no wife: he has a partner. A woman has no children; she brings forth young who belong to the master. Husband and wife, after they have gone through the mockery of a marriage-ceremony and have had children together, may be separated at a moment's notice; the wife will be forced to accept another husband, so as to have more children, and the husband will choose another wife. Slave-owners would as soon think of preserving conjugal fidelity among their sheep and horses as among their slaves. The farmer who sells his calf, and the planter who sells the suckling from the mother's breast, act with exactly the same feeling, and from the same motive. Both believe their gain to be superior to the laws of nature, and regard as property what God gave to freedom. This has never been in any age of the world's history before. Judaism, the Greek and Roman times, Mohammedanism, all recognised the rights of nature in their slaves. Christianity is the only faith whose professors have violated and destroyed these rights; yet Christianity is the only faith whose essential element has been human equality.

Slave testimony not being received in America, is, like all natural injustice, beginning to work reflective evil. In several instances where the testimony of a slave would be most valuable, the law steps in, and by its suicidal enactment nullifies justice. Slave-owners feel this so much, that many of them are considering the propriety of admitting coloured testimony; in self-defence, and for self-interest; not for equity. Yet such a step would meet with violent opposition, as recognising the possession of intellectual perceptions in slaves; at present denied and refused to them. It is but fair that wrong should recoil on the head of the wrong-doer; and this is essentially the case at present in America. By denying the negro the imprescriptible rights of humanity, the slave-owner has but increased his own anxiety and losses. Instead of intelligent, self-reliant men, he has wished for ignorant machines; instead of servants, he has asked for slaves, and now he finds that his machines go wrong without such incessant overlooking as makes life one long day of toil, and that his slaves do not in very truth, serve him. The evil he has done to others has come back on himself; he has sown the wind, he is now reaping the whirlwind.

Still, the question of emancipation is as difficult as ever; though its solution is not, perhaps, as far off as ever. Virginia and Washington are approaching that solution, but very gradually; and it will be long before the like influences spread farther southward. By the introduction of free white labour, in connection with the gradual emancipation of individuals and small groups, and their consequent moral, social, and intellectual elevation used as examples, the difficulty seems to us in a fair way of being in the distant future overcome. Again we say, convince the planter that slavery is unprofitable, and slavery is at an end. If a native Virginian can confess, as one who wrote to the editor of the New York Daily Times, that "where you would see one white labourer on a northern farm, scores of blacks should appear on the Virginian plantation, the best of them only performing each day one-fourth a white man's daily task, and all requiring an incessant watch to get even this small modicum of labour," we may be sure that many others feel the same disadvantage and the same distress. The Rev. E. J. Stearns, of Maryland, shows by an elaborate calculation, in his criticism on Uncle Tom's Cabin, that in Maryland the "cost of a negro at twenty-one years of age has been to the man who raised him eight hundred dollars. Six per cent. interest on this cost, with one and three quarters per cent. for life insurances, per annum, makes the lowest wages of a negro, under the most favourable circumstances, sixty-two dollars a year, or five dollars a month, paid in advance in the shape of food and clothing."

Slave-holding is degrading to both master and slave, despite the sophistries of the south to show its mercy and its value. The better class of planters—acknowledging the bitter truth that the institution which they defend so warmly is a degradation to themselves—send their children to be educated in the north: they confess that the influence of slavery demoralises the young freeman as much as the negro himself; and what greater condemnation than this can a father or a citizen pronounce?

Let us hope that though slowly we are certainly approaching the end of slave times. The blind violence of its partisans,

their overrunning of Kansas with slave-state military, and laying waste towns and villages; their striking down a defenceless senator at his desk; their virulent opposition to all proposals for mediation and arbitration; their ridiculous pretensions to birth and blood, supported with revolver-fights and laudatory addresses to Preston S. Brooks, are so many means to an end precisely opposite to that end which they strive to attain. Their sober, earnest, reflective fellow-citizens of the north are only strengthened both morally and politically by every outrage, either against common sense or common humanity which they perpetuate. The assertion that slavery is a domestic institution of their own, with which other states have no right to interfere, is a vain and a false one. Slavery is, in the abstract, an abomination; but persisted in under such laws as those existing in the United States, it is something more. The federal legislature has interfered in favour of the institution by passing the Fugitive Slave Bill, and it is equally bound to interfere against it.

Many of the views here stated are those of the thoughtful and thorough abolitionist, whose journey in the Sea-board Slave States we have already mentioned. Mr. Olmsted observes with accuracy and reflects with care. He would not carry out manumission—as its opponents prefer to perpetuate it—at the point of the sword, or mate the freedom of the slaves with the destruction of the masters; and, although he is not prepared with a remedy for American Slavery, he is a careful and temperate pathologist of the disease. Some of his descriptions have unusual merit. So little are they tainted with exaggeration that his most hideous traits of slave life are depicted from the unconscious revelations of the masters themselves.

TWO-PENCE AN HOUR.

First and last, she has had a pretty hard battle of it; and may be allowed, as a woman of experience, to lay down the law concerning it. She always says this when she has been brought out on the subject of Governessing. She always asks, when she hears that any mother meditates training her daughter as a teacher, or that any girl is intending to strike for independence through the briary paths of knowledge, "Is she pretty? Is she gentle-spirited? Is she of a loving disposition? Is she of attractive manners?" These questions being replied to in the affirmative, she immediately responds, "Then, she won't do for a governess," and proceeds to explain categorically why those qualifications, which are most pleasing in women generally, are hindrances to teachers in particular. Miss Green is then supposed to be reciting the fruits of her own experience. She was a contemporary of my own at Miss Thoroton's, and possessed, in an eminent degree, all those endowments which she deprecates as stumbling-blocks She is forty-seven now, methodical, quiet, and very grey. Nobody would ever suspect that she had been of a lively, animated beauty, and cheerful temper. It is the life, she says, that destroys that, very early.

I have known, she adds, in a candid matter-of-fact way which does not invite contradiction, I have known governesses called impertinent for looking pretty; forward, presuming, forgetful of their stations—what not? The women do not like it, and—yes—let her be as modest, as self-possessed, and as quiet as she will—the men (it is the young ones, whose sense and moustaches are not fully fledged) will speak to her cavalierly, and stare at her rudely, as they would not do at their host's daughter. In nine cases out of ten, governesses put up with the insolence calmly; a slight blush, perhaps, and a little quiver of womanly indignation, disturbs them for a moment, and passes. There are not many Becky Sharpes amongst us. We take the extended brace of digits and are thankful. Women snub us, or patronise us, or walk over us, and we are silent under the harrow. We cannot afford to play the same pranks; and I do not think, as a class, we are disposed to do it. We are a hard-working, conscientious, well-principled, and well-educated race of young persons; a little despised, a little pitied, and a little neglected; all of which it would be advisable to support with a little more equanimity, seeing that long experience has proved these trifles inseparable from our condition. People have written books about us, and have invested us—or tried to do so—with an interest we have not got; and, generally speaking, they have done us more harm than good. Becky Sharpe, for instance, is quite exceptional; Jane Eyre less so; in short, her governness experience, up to her flight from Thornfield, is true. I have known parallel cases, in which, with temptation not less than hers, girls have fought their battles as bravely, as painfully, and as successfully; but, with the final romantic result, no! Little Miss Cann, Miss Quigley, and Ruth Pinch are satisfactory, especially Miss Cann—a clever, shrewd, kind-hearted, sharp-spoken, plain little woman, with just romance enough about her to be a woman and not a machine. I approve Miss Cann. She is respectable, she is good, and she is nice. I dare say everybody who employed her, from her youth upward, designated her, in the distinctive phraseology, as applied to governesses, "a pains taking young person, and a very deserving woman," and treated her with a civil impertinence as a domestic serf and necessary nuisance. Pretty and attractive a governess ought not to be; it is not set down in the bond that she should be. A set of sharp features and a sedate manner are most becoming to her. She must not straighten her waist and play with her cha-

telaine, as young women who are not governesses may do; indeed, she has no business to have either waist or chatelaine. A good stiff flat shape, like a back-board, and a silver warming-pan-watch depending from her apron-belt, are appropriate belongings; and if she have a due sense of propriety, she will obtain them at whatever sacrifice. Though a governess may be a well-informed woman, as many governesses are, if anybody beneficently treats her to conversation, she ought only to generalise on the charms of her office, the delightful dispositions of pupils, and, if encouraged so far, on educational books and systems. Literature is not her topic, and never let her be professional out of her school-room: if anyone blunders or appeals to her for information, let her memory fail, but never, never let her know more than her superiors—it is a delusion and a snare. It is my belief that when Mr. Snob asked Miss Wirt that question about Dante Alghieri, she coincided with him as to the origin of the sirname, that she might not pique him by a correction. Any judicious governess would, to a strange man, be equally jesuitical. What business had he to endeavour to test her knowledge? I don't approve of such gratuitous examinations; and, if Mr. Snob had asked me the question he propounded to Miss Wirt, I should have returned the same answer as she did. I dare not contemplate the consequences of a governess in a well-regulated family knowing what an honoured guest appears not to know. Mr. Snob never was a governess, or else he would be aware of the treacherous danger of such an assumption.

Suppose, again, that a teacher is gentle-spirited and of a loving disposition; the first soon dwindles into a feeble non-resistance of injuries, and the last hungers and thirsts often until it perishes of inanition. I know it is a shocking thing to say, but children are mostly selfish; so long as you are administering to their amusement or comfort, they will love you, but the moment it becomes necessary to thwart a whim or control a passion, you are altogether hateful; and they hate you, for the time being, very cordially. I have been loved and hated myself a dozen times a-week; and I know a little damsel now who, when her temper is crossed, tells her governess that she hates her pet cat, and is not above giving the innocent pussy a sly blow or kick as proxy for its much-enduring mistress. I do not choose to talk much about wounded feelings in connection with our position. I think it is never well to expect more than a courteous civility—and that, except from bears and bearesses, we get now-a-days almost as regularly as our salaries—but what I do complain of is the wretched pay. People demand everything for pay that is next to nothing—about two-pence-halfpenny per accomplishment per quarter! A governess who is six professors rolled into one gets from fifty to a hundred guineas (lucky woman), but a governess who is under that status gets twenty, twenty-five, or thirty pounds, and is thankful, poor soul!

Miss Green belongs to the latter class. When I consider what lies before my old friend I do not wonder at her strictures. She began to teach at seventeen, and she will continue to teach till seventy, perhaps, and then she will retire into a little room and exist, poorly enough, on the scrapings of her salaries and two meals a-day, as the superannuated sisterhood is in the habit of doing.

I have lately discharged a commission for a friend—namely, in examining the register at one of the many institutions for providing governesses with situations and employers with governesses. I and my cousin, who accompanied me, were admitted by an unhealthy buttony boy, who was regaling on a pottle of strawberries, into a large room with a long table and a row of ladies, who were studying the registers. All the books being engaged, we were refreshed by the interrogatories of a person who appeared to be the superintendent. She spoke in a hard sharp voice, as if—to use a Yorkshire phrase—we were dirt under her feet. It was the mistress-voice, to which many poor hearts will get accustomed in the servitude they go to seek. I thought to myself, Day after day come here aching, hoping, weary women, and you give them a foretaste of what life will probably be to them. Would it not be as easy to speak with a friendly kindness, to encourage them, instead of patronising so severely? Woman, if you have been a governess yourself, you ought to know how refreshing a word, a look even, of sympathy, is to an anxious creature! They come to your institution, not when they are well placed, but when they are homeless, these poor teachers, and you speak to some of them as I would not speak to a well-conditioned dog. For shame! You may be—probably you are—an excellent woman, but you are too angular in manner, and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that if Miss Green had been in my place, she would have gone away discouraged, and probably crying under her veil. Speaking daily to poor women, to dependants, may have something to do with your uncourteousness, but I should like to see you receive the Duchess of Powderpuff, now on the books as wanting a governess.

I had time to make these reflections before I was bid to "Look over with that lady," in a curt, impatient tone; I sat down, all obedience, and read the entries of page after page, selecting here and there a curiosity. One lady demanded a first-rate governess for thirty pounds; another, wished for a widow; a third, for a good-tempered person who did not wear spectacles; a fourth, offered a situation to any lady who, possessing large acquirements,

would be satisfied with a small salary and the consciousness that she was doing good; and a fifth—concluding the list of accomplishments — desired in the following remarkable manner: "No one need apply who has not confidence in her own good temper."

The salaries, generally speaking, were low —very low; sixteen, twenty, and from that to forty pounds being the average; a few were fifty and sixty. One family offered eighty, and one a hundred; but all demanded much more than the value of their money. To know English generally, German, French, and Italian—acquire (in their respective countries — to be an accomplished pianiste — to sing, draw and dance, were the usual group of accomplishments demanded for the liberal pay of thirty and forty pounds. One or two ladies had caught hold of a hard idea called Natural Philosophy, and others would not be satisfied without a knowledge of Physical Geography; but, I did not observe that a higher rate of pay was held out as a bait to draw Natural female Philosophers and Physical feminine Geographers into the bosoms of families of this superior order of cultivation. The reflection was forced upon my mind that many ladies who want governesses must be profoundly foolish to imagine that women like themselves can be proficients in a half-a-dozen arts and sciences which, separately and singly, form the whole life study of able men. The cheap system prevails to a ruinous extent amongst governesses; it has lowered them as they never ought to have been lowered; they are compelled to seem to know what it is impossible that they should know. Supposing a case; if I lost my little property, I should naturally turn to the scholastic profession — everybody who loses her little property does, to speak literal truth, I should only advertise myself as possessing a tolerable knowledge of my own language and its literature; and what sort of salary should I get? Perhaps sixteen pounds, as a nursery-governess. Therefore, like thousands more, I should add French, Italian, music, and drawing, in various branches, and then my value—not real, but nominal—might rise to thirty, forty, even sixty pounds! People will be deceived in this way continually, so long as the cheap system holds good.

Altogether, my study of that Register for Governesses did not please me; it made me a convert to Miss Green's opinions of the hardships of her class. A governess at twenty pounds a-year gets thirteen-pence per day; reckoning her to work only six hours a day—which is almost the lowest average—she gets a fraction more than twopence an hour. Twopence for an hour at the piano, twopence for an hour at chalk-drawing, twopence for an hour of English lessons, twopence for an hour of French, twopence for an hour of German, twopence for an hour of singing songs and doing Italian lessons, and the odd penny for the natural philosophy and physical geography thrown in as make-weights.

CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

Having been condemned to be shot for what the court-martial at Rastadt, sitting in judgment over political offenders declared to be capital crime, I was carried back to the Fort, and placed in a dungeon used as a condemned cell.* The day was Saturday, the fifteenth of September, and the hour three in the afternoon. The rule was, that men sentenced as I had been, should be shot at five o'clock on the morning following their condemnation; but, if the next day happened to be Sunday, the execution was to take place the same evening before dark. At three o'clock in the afternoon, on a Saturday in the middle of September, I had not, by this calculation, very long to live.

Under these circumstances it was not necessary that I should be critical respecting the accommodation furnished in my chamber. On a raised board in one corner there was a tumbled litter: the bed occupied by a comrade of mine who had been shot that morning. A gaoler came with rueful looks to ask whether I wished for anything, and whether he might not summon the clergyman. I asked for writing materials, a good dinner, a bottle of Rhenish, and a few cigars; for, bodily refreshment I did need; and as to spiritual help (though God knows I needed that too), I knew it was not to be obtained from a minister who had found nothing to talk about over the grave of a fallen officer but Nebuchadnezzar and his pride. While I sat writing on the board that was my table, I looked through the grated window at the sentry, who kept guard over me, a red-cheeked, honest fellow from Thuringia, who liked his work so little that he was fairly blubbering. A little of the sentry's sympathy would have made of the chaplain a better man for his all-important work.

But the best sympathy was being spent on me elsewhere. My wife during the past week had not been idle. A few days before the trial she was in Carlsruhe. She had then called on the minister-at-war, Colonel von Moggerbach. He is now dead, and it can hurt nobody to name one who received a suffering woman with humane emotions. "I am rising," he said, "from the sick bed to which I was brought by grief at these sad things. It is not with my wish or approval that so much blood has been spilt. However, we have ordered better now that all sentences of death not decreed unanimously by the court-martials, shall be forwarded here for ratification. That is your only hope of mercy."

My wife attempted, too, upon the very morning of the trial, to see the Grand Duke. She

* See page 75 of the present volume.

Went to the palace, but found none who would announce her. Footmen ran from her, covering their eyes. She wandered through the rooms, and lost herself in a great saloon, at the very time that I stood, as she knew, before my military judges. A kind face timidly peeped through a door; for the servants' hearts were with her, and their eyes were upon her; and a faltering voice cried, "Hist! We must not show you to the duke, my lady; but his private secretary is now coming this way; he is going to his royal highness. Speak to him; but don't say you were told to do so." The kind face vanished, and the secretary, who came, was addressed. He could not take the wife to plead in the duke's presence; but promised to say, on her part, as much as possible. After this, my helper hurried back to Rastadt, and reached her inn there about noon. At the inn she found some people who had been in the castle. They gave her hope; said that I had won much by my speech in defence; that the witnesses had spoken to my advantage, and that all went on well. Her brother came at last; and she read the issue in his face. She had obtained leave to visit me before my execution. And now I will give, from her diary, some paragraphs to show the woman's side of these experiences in the life of a man whose crime it was to believe in the existence of a German people. It is the wife who now speaks:—

"He is coming," said the people in the bar-room, and rushed to the window. I followed them. There came the carriage surrounded by soldiers; gendarmes sat in it, and he in the midst of them. Knowing that I was in that inn, his mournful eyes were seeking for me. Almost senseless, I fell back in the arms of the kind-hearted hostess; but I recovered soon, and called his name. It was a cry of anguish coming out of the very depth of my heart. I strove to get through the window into the street, thinking the carriage would stop; but, I was held back, and I passed half an hour almost mad with grief. At length I was again able to think, and my hopes clung with all the energy of despair to the plan of deliverance prepared by me. I went with my brother Franz into my room, and gave him my clothes, tied his hair, and tried the hood and the bonnet. He became perfectly disguised, and his appearance was not strange at all. The gown had the due length and width, and Franz himself ceased to doubt our success. These garments my husband must put on; it was to see whether all was right that I first tried them on my brother, who was of like size and shape.

Strengthened and animated by the hope of success, I went to Otto. He was already in that casemate, behind which the sentenced usually were shot. The hope of saving him supported me. The prison was almost dark, and there was nothing in it but two bundles of straw, a pitcher with water, and the half of a black coarse loaf. Otto was writing letters to his friends and to the German people, for which he was to die. When I entered the prison, he came towards me with hasty paces, and taking firmly my hand, he said: "Courage, Helene, courage! It must be!" His firmness supported mine; but I spoke much and quickly, to have no time for a weakness, which had already overcome my brother, who sat weeping on the ground.

They brought in the dinner, provided by the town. Otto tried it, and said: "This is my last meal" (the Henikers' mahlzeit); "let us see what they have sent to me, and whether the wine is good. No, it is not good; I will not drink much of it, and I will not eat either; my appetite is gone."

When the gaoler was gone, I told Otto my plan. He would not approve of it. He had done with life, he said, and conquered the bitterness of death. His fate was not to be averted.

"Ah, but it may," I cried, "since you are not condemned unanimously. Dr. K— and the judge of examination are gone to Carlsruhe to obtain an alteration of the sentence."

"No, it is impossible; there were five voices against me," said Otto, pacing his prison with me.

I myself became doubtful now, and sent for the lieutenant, who had humanely left me alone with my husband, although bound to be present at our interview. When he came, he confirmed what I had said, and added, that in any case Otto would not be shot, late as it then was, before Monday morning.

"Now we will think of nothing else," I said, "than how to save you; and before all, my brother must leave us, that he may not be involved."

The carriage that brought me to the prison waited before the postern, a dark vaulted passage under the main rampart. After having used the carriage, F— was to send it back, and to give notice, whether the gate had been passed without question. In half-an-hour the gaoler brought me a small slip of paper, upon which was pencilled, "Dr. K— is gone to Carlsruhe—passed without impediment."

Next, I sent for a dinner to my inn, and urged my husband to eat: "For," I said, "you cannot tell how long you may be forced to hunger on your flight." But he said: "I will not fly; I cannot do so. What is to become of the officer who is so kind as to permit our being together all this time, against his orders? What is to become of you, if you stay here instead of me, exposed to the anger of a troop of soldiers?"

Afterwards, I found that he had pride of his own in staying. He would not fly; a lady who had offered him the means an hour before the surrender, told me that he

had refused her also. He preferred, he told her, to be shot, since flight would expose him among his friends to the suspicion of a treachery in the surrender. Having put aside my plan, he now dined with good appetite, and took two glasses of wine.

It became dark by-and-by, and my heart was very sore. The good-natured lieutenant came to fetch me, but I begged his permission to stay with my husband, and he had not the heart to resist. At five o'clock, he said, the carriage should be before the postern, to convey me back into the town.

It was then seven o'clock in the evening, Otto was happy that I should be a few hours longer with him. I was depressed, but had strength enough to conceal my weakness. I became more and more sorrowful, and watched with anguish every step of the sentries and patrols. The hours flew with rapidity, and yet the minutes were very long! On a sudden, I heard the tramping of many feet coming to the prison, and awakened Otto. He rose directly, and went into the other compartment of the casemate, where was the door, to speak to those who came. They were two officers, who whispered to him—but I heard every word—that the soldiers for the execution were ordered for next morning at half-past four.

"It is hard," answered O—, "that they make with me an exception, for there should be no executions on a Sunday."

"We have thought so too," answered the officers; "but it is ordered, as we say. Moreover, you have our word of honour that we know nothing positive beyond the order for the patrol to be ready; and we must request your lady to leave you at three o'clock, when we will have the honour to fetch her and accompany her to her hotel."

"I thank you, gentlemen," my husband said; "she will be ready."

It is impossible to describe the agonies of those hours, the remembrance of which never can fade from me but with my life. They could not be borne, I think, twice in a lifetime. Fear to give way to weakness, and to move Otto too much by it, made me so collected, that I shed no tear, and seemed almost deprived of feeling. We spoke all night together. My husband held me in his arms and tried to comfort me. But I had only one thought: his hand so warm, his breath so hot now, and all will be cold to-morrow: he will be dead—an inanimate body.

At a few minutes before three o'clock in the morning the two officers came back to fetch me.

When I was alone in my inn bedroom, I opened the window and looked out towards the dawn.

These are some portions of the journal of my wife. From them I turn back to my own experiences. When she left me I outwardly prepared myself for the last passage of my life, by putting on clean linen, taking off the locket I wore round my neck, and cutting a lock from my hair for persons dear to me. I chose also a red silk neckerchief with which to bind my eyes. I had a strong sensation which was not fear; or, if fear, was a pleased fear. I had known nothing in my former life so much resembling it as the sensation upon entering, while still a youth and inexpert, a ball-room, in which there were many beauties. I had also—as I had had the day before—a peculiar longing for a rose. As for anything like the experiences of Victor Hugo's Last Hours of a Condemned, they may be described from nature, but the nature they describe was happily not mine.

At dawn I heard in the yard many steps. They are coming, I thought. Farewell beautiful earth; farewell to the old mother who takes up day after day the paper with a trembling hand; farewell my dear good wife! There was no need for such leave-taking. The first of my visitors whom I distinguished through the gloom of the cell was the city major.

"Is it time, gentlemen?" I asked; "I am quite ready."

"No, friend," said a voice from behind the rest—the voice of my late advocate, Dr. K.—"we bring you better news."

This brave helper, having a friend in the Ministry of War, had paid a night visit to Carlsruhe, and had come back, during the hour after midnight, with distinct news of the alteration of my sentence. Prussian "misunderstandings" caused in those days many to get their reprieves after they were shot, and in my own case I am tolerably sure that, but for Dr. K., I should have been shot on Sunday morning, and the commutation of my sentence would have been announced on Monday.

Words of true sympathy, written under the strongest of emotions, well or ill written, must have an interest of their own for human eyes. Therefore I again take scraps from my wife's diary to carry on this narrative.

I would go directly to see my husband, but I was not permitted, and wrote letters to my brother, to my Mannheim friends, and to my good mother-in-law. At half-past six I was with Otto, who was very calm, and liked not to show his gladness. He tried to bear with the same equanimity this happy change. But I myself felt very happy, infinitely happy for him; for he loves this life very much. Through my entreaties, I had been permitted to stay as long as I liked with my husband. All the day through came Baudin, and even Prussian officers, and many common soldiers, to the iron grate before the window, and expressed their pleasure at his escape. There was a much greater interest shown towards him than to any one

of his comrades who had suffered earlier. An old sergeant told me that there had been much stirring amongst the common soldiers in the barracks, who liked my husband, for his having behaved so well towards his soldiers of the garrison of Rastadt, and that they had been much discontented with the sentence of death. He said to me that on the evening before, at the time fixed for the execution, the crown of the main rampart had been crowded with more than a thousand soldiers, notwithstanding that the being there in that way was forbidden under a threat of five days' imprisonment. He spoke very mysteriously, and I did not quite understand at what he was aiming with his hints. My good kind hostess sent a very good dinner and beautiful fruit, and Otto fell to with very much good-will. How happy I was to see him eat so heartily again!

Monday, 17th September. The commandant gave me yesterday a ticket for the fort and garrison, and the Prussian captain of the guard was so kind as to give it me back again, and even to permit me, upon his own responsibility, to stay till the morrow with my husband.

Early in the morning there came to our window the prisoner who had been brought on the previous afternoon into a little building opposite our den, and separated from it only by a narrow yard. The sentries were very good, and permitted him to speak to us, although it was against their orders. He was a Baron von B——, who had, before the revolution, been a Prussian first-lieutenant in Cologne, but left the service. My husband had procured him the command of a batallion in his own regiment, but he became ill, and was forced to remain in Heidelberg. When the Prussians occupied that town, he was so imprudent as to give himself up to them as a prisoner of war. Having a fever, he was unable to fly. How pale and wretched he looked! How excited he was, and how cast down at the same time! Four weeks ago they had declared against him the sentence of death, and he was awaiting then the ratification of it from Berlin! The Prussian authorities were very bitter against prisoners who had formerly served in the Prussian army, and most bitter against officers; therefore the poor sick man was put into one of the most gloomy and unhealthy casemates; where he was left quite alone. By the humanity of a Baden lieutenant who had care over the prisoners of this fort, however, he at last had a few comforts allowed him, and was moved to a more healthy place. Glad to see Otto again, and speak to him, he heartily partook of my joy.

In the afternoon he was removed to a better prison. He gave me a letter for his brother which I volunteered to take care of. A few days afterwards this friend of ours was shot.

His place was filled by Mr. T., who had been chairman of the artisan-union in Cologne. This was a brave, high-spirited young man, who had preserved his courage. He was one of the truest followers of my husband, who became acquainted with him in Strasbourg. He also had been sentenced to death, and was waiting for the ratification from Berlin. At first, he said to me, it was an ugly feeling, when the soldiers in the morning opened the door of his prison; then he thought always, "They are coming to bring me out. But now," he said, "I am used to it; and I care not what may come; but I must not think of my bride! After having searched for me everywhere she has been here, but was not allowed to see me." He said this in a careless tone, but there was a quivering in his voice that I could well understand.

Mr. T. commanded the battalion of Baron B., when that gentleman became ill. The soldiers of this Volkswehs battalion being most of them inhabitants of Mannheim, stayed in their town when my husband left it, and dispersed. Mr. T., riding quite alone on the road towards Heidelberg, to rejoin the revolutionary army, was caught in a hollow way by the peasants of a neighbouring village, who thought they would win the good opinion of the Prussians, by presenting to them, when they came, a revolutionary officer as a prisoner. This happened in the first days after the entry of the Prussians into Baden, when they were very much excited against the rebels. The cuirassiers who transported T. to Heidelberg, dealt very barbarously with him. Fettered hand and foot with a heavy iron chain, he must needs go at the same pace with the horses; and, when he flagged, they drove him on with the points of their swords. Even passing foot-soldiers could not refrain from abusing him by words and blows; and, when he arrived at last at Heidelberg, his body was beaten brown and blue, and the blood trickled from it. On his head alone he had seven wounds, and the blood so flowed over his face, that he could not see. Officers to whom he complained of the rudeness of the soldiers, said to him, "that the soldiers must have their fun also." He was lodged in a very miserable prison, whence, scarcely recovered from his wounds, he was brought to Rastadt, and shut up in one of the most unhealthy dungeons they could find.

The sentries being very reasonable, he and my husband talked all day about the revolution. If an officer came near, the sentry always gave us warning, and we separated.

Tuesday, 18th September. Otto is contented with his situation, notwithstanding the damp straw and thick water-dropping walls of his prison. My company and the good things sent every day by my kind hostess, are very thankfully accepted by him. How hard is the lot of the poor prisoners, who are glad

when even a sentry appears to them! How horrible is their solitude without occupation, light, books, or tobacco, so much wished for by them all!

The officers who visited my husband to-day, said it was believed that the change of his sentence would be to arrest in a fortress, and one of these officers—a Baden one—whose parents live at Kiplau (that place being a fortress) was so kind as to promise us letters of recommendation to his friends. Grant Heaven, that these reports may have truth in them!

I had a great sorrow to-day, when the captain of the day fetched me from the casemate. The lieutenant on duty had recommended me not to show myself, when this captain should come, because he was a very severe man. Therefore, when the sentry announced him to us, I hid myself in the darkest corner of my husband's litter, and he threw his cloak over me. But this was useless. When the captain entered the foremost compartment of the casemate, he said to his prisoner:

"I have heard that your lady is here. Where is she?"

"She is asleep just now," he answered.

"Well, then, awake her. I cannot permit her staying any longer with you, for she has only permission to see you for about half-an-hour, and in the presence of an officer; so runs our order."

Otto was obliged to take away his cloak; I rose from the straw, and, quite confused, followed the captain. My husband told me, that it was the same who sat in the court-martial. I dare not to go again this day to the commandant to get a new ticket of admission; I will go to-morrow and stay at home to-day. My hostess and her daughters are compassionate. They both knew my husband, who had often dined in this hotel. The young girl was very glad when he sent her his riding-whip as a token of remembrance. What a comfort are such kind people when one is so very sad! The landlady told me that the city-major Von M. had lost his place for having brought, beforehand, and without authorisation, the news of the alteration of the sentence to my husband. Probably they would have announced it to him when he was standing on the sandhill, or when he was lying there a bleeding corpse. It would have been only a misunderstanding.

Wednesday, 19th September. I was very quiet and happy with Otto in the prison. The commandant-major Von W. was uncommonly polite, and gave me a ticket, on which was marked that I could see my husband without the presence of an officer, and for as long as I wished. But the sentries of the day were rough. A red-haired man behaved as one in a passion, although nobody had done him any wrong. He always knocked with the dog of his gunlock, and seemed to have a mind to shoot poor T. whenever he showed himself near his window. When my husband gave an explanation to him, he cried:

"No stirring! Once you were a lord, now is my turn, and you have to keep silence." Even to me he used ill language, and behaved ill. But this is the only soldier I have yet had to complain of.

To-morrow a court-martial will sit, and my husband will then hear his altered sentence. The officers pretend to know that it is arrest in a fortress, and Otto is believing too much in their foresight. Grant Heaven that he may not be mistaken; for the House of Correction would distress him more than ten decrees of death.

On the forenoon of the twentieth of September, I was brought before the court-martial again. I saw that the sergeant who had not voted for my death, opposed to the strong wish of all the other judges, was no more a member of the court; there was in his place another sergeant, who perhaps knew his duty better. In Baden the Prussians made very free with the lives even of their own subjects, which they dared not do in Prussia. Von B. and Von T. were shot, and I myself should have been shot also, had the verdict been unanimous, or had I been tried eight days sooner. For, that order to send the sentence to Carlsruhe in case of any difference among the judges was only a few days old, and I was the first to profit by it. I had good help too, in the fact that the public prosecutor himself was in too great haste to have me killed, and in his eagerness behaved imprudently. When my wife afterwards saw the Baden minister of war, she thought it proper to say a few words of thanks to that gentleman; he replied:

"There is no occasion for your thanks; the sentence could not have been valid, owing to the unjustifiable manner in which the law officer of the crown provoked it."

The sentence of death was changed into one of TEN YEARS IN THE HOUSE OF CORRECTION!

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"*Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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NOBODY, SOMEBODY, AND EVERYBODY.

THE power of Nobody is becoming so enormous in England, and he alone is responsible for so many proceedings, both in the way of commission and omission; he has so much to answer for, and is so constantly called to account; that a few remarks upon him may not be ill-timed.

The hand which this surprising person had in the late war is amazing to consider. It was he who left the tents behind, who left the baggage behind, who chose the worst possible ground for encampments, who provided no means of transport, who killed the horses, who paralysed the commissariat, who knew nothing of the business he professed to know and monopolised, who decimated the English army. It was Nobody who gave out the famous unroasted coffee, it was Nobody who made the hospitals more horrible than language can describe, it was Nobody who occasioned all the dire confusion of Balaklava harbor, it was even Nobody who ordered the fatal Balaklava cavalry charge. The non-relief of Kars was the work of Nobody, and Nobody has justly and severely suffered for that infamous transaction.

It is difficult for the mind to span the career of Nobody. The sphere of action opened to this wonderful person, so enlarges every day, that the limited faculties of Anybody are too weak to compass it. Yet, the nature of the last tribunal expressly appointed for the detection and punishment of Nobody may, as a part of his stupendous history, be glanced at without winking.

At the Old Bailey, when a person under strong suspicion of mal-practices is tried, it is the custom (the rather as the strong suspicion has been found, by a previous enquiry, to exist), to conduct the trial on stringent principles, and to confide it to impartial hands. It has not yet become the practice of the criminal, or even of the civil courts—but they, indeed, are constituted for the punishment of Somebody—to invite the prisoner's or defendant's friends to talk the matter over with him in a cosy, tea-and-muffin sort of way, and make out a verdict together, that shall be what a deposed iron king called making things "pleasant." But, when Nobody was shown within these few weeks to have occasioned intolerable misery and loss in the late war, and to have incurred a vast amount of guilt in bringing to pass results which all morally sane persons can understand to be fraught with fatal consequences, far beyond present calculation, this cosy course of proceeding was the course pursued. My Lord, intent upon establishing the responsibility of Nobody, walked into court, as he would walk into a ball-room; and My Lord's friends and admirers toadied and fawned upon him in court, as they would toady him and fawn upon him in the other assembly. My Lord carried his head very high, and took a mighty great tone with the common people; and there was no question as to anything My Lord did or said, and Nobody got triumphantly fixed. Ignorance enough and incompetency enough to bring any country that the world has ever seen to defeat and shame, and to lay any head that ever was in it low, were proved beyond question; but, My Lord cried, "On Nobody's eyes be it!" and My Lord's impaneled chorus cried, "There is no impostor but Nobody; on him be the shame and blame!"

Surely, this is a rather wonderful state of things to be realising itself so long after the Flood, in such a country as England. Surely, it suggests to us with some force, that wherever this ubiquitous Nobody is, there mischief is and there danger is. For, it is especially to be borne in mind that wherever failure is accomplished, there Nobody lurks. With success, he has nothing to do. That is Everybody's business, and all manner of improbable people will invariably be found at the bottom of it. But, it is the great feature of the present epoch that all public disaster in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is assuredly, and to a dead certainty, Nobody's work.

We have, it is not to be denied, punished Nobody, with exemplary rigor. We have, as a nation, allowed ourselves to be deluded by no influences or insolences of office or rank, but have dealt with Nobody in a spirit of equal and uncompromising justice that has moved the admiration of the world. I have had some opportunities of remarking, out of England, the impression made on other

peoples by the stern Saxon spirit with which, the default proved and the wrong done, we have tracked down and punished the defaulter and wrong-doer. And I do here declare my solemn belief, founded on much I have seen, that the remembrance of our frightful failures within the last three years, and of our retaliation upon Nobody, will be more vivid and potent in Europe (mayhap in Asia, too, and in America) for years upon years to come than all our successes since the days of the Spanish Armada.

In civil matters we have Nobody equally active. When a civil office breaks down, the break-down is sure to be in Nobody's department. I entreat on my reader, dubious of this proposition, to wait until the next break-down (the reader is certain not to have to wait long), and to observe, whether or no, it is in Nobody's department. A dispatch of the greatest moment is sent to a minister abroad, at a most important crisis; Nobody reads it. British subjects are affronted in a foreign territory; Nobody interferes. Our own loyal fellow-subjects, a few thousand miles away, want to exchange political, commercial, and domestic intelligence with us; Nobody stops the mail. The government, with all its mighty means and appliances, is invariably beaten and outstripped by private enterprise; which we all know to be Nobody's fault. Something will be the national death of us, some day; and who can doubt that Nobody will be brought in Guilty?

Now, might it not be well, if it were only for the novelty of the experiment, to try Somebody a little? Reserving Nobody for statues, and stars and garters, and batons, and places and pensions without duties, what if we were to try Somebody for real work? More than that, what if we were to punish Somebody with a most inflexible and grim severity, when we caught him pompously undertaking in holiday-time to do work, and found him, when the working-time came, altogether unable to do it?

Where do I, as an Englishman, want Somebody? Before high Heaven, I want him everywhere! I look round the whole dull horizon, and I want Somebody to do work while the Brazen Head, already hoarse with crying "Time is!" passes into the second warning, "Time was!" I don't want Somebody to let off Parliamentary penny crackers against evils that need to be stormed by the thunderbolts of Jove. I don't want Somebody to sustain, for Parliamentary and Club entertainment, and by the desire of several persons of distinction, the character of a light old gentleman, or a fast old gentleman, or a debating old gentleman, or a dandy old gentleman, or a free-and-easy old gentleman, or a capital old gentleman considering his years. I want Somebody to be clever in doing the business, not clever in evading it. The more clever he is in the latter quality (which has been the making of Nobody), the worse I hold it to be for me and my children and for all men and their children. I want Somebody who shall be no fiction; but a capable, good, determined workman. For, it seems to me that from the moment when I accept Anybody in a high place, whose function in that place is to exchange winks with me instead of doing the serious deeds that belong to it, I set afloat a system of false pretence and general swindling, the taint of which soon begins to manifest itself in every department of life, from Newgate to the Court of Bankruptcy, and thence to the highest Court of Appeal. For this reason, above all others, I want to see the working Somebody in every responsible position which the winking Somebody and Nobody now monopolise between them.

And this brings me back to Nobody; to the great irresponsible, guilty, wicked, blind giant of this time. O friends, countrymen, and lovers, look at that carcase smelling strong of prussic acid, (drunk out of a silver milkpot, which was a part of the plunder, or as the less pernicious thieves call it, the swag), cumbering Hampstead Heath by London town! Think of the history of which that abomination is at once the beginning and the end; of the dark social scenes daguerreotyped in it; and of the Lordship of your Treasury to which Nobody, driving a shameful bargain, raised this creature when he was alive. Follow the whole story, and finish by listening to the parliamentary lawyers as they tell you that Nobody knows anything about it; that Nobody is entitled (from the attorney point of view) to believe that there ever was such a business at all; that Nobody can be allowed to demand, for decency's sake, the swift expulsion from the lawmaking body of the surviving instrument in the heap of crime; that such expulsion is, in a word, just Nobody's business, and must at present be constitutionally left to Nobody to do.

There is a great fire raging in the land, and—by all the polite precedents and prescriptions!—you shall leave it to Nobody to put it out with a squirt, expected home in a year or so. There are inundations bursting on the valleys, and—by the same precedents and prescriptions!—you shall trust to Nobody to bale the water out with a bottomless tin kettle. Nobody being responsible to you for his perfect success in these little feats, and you confiding in him, you shall go to Heaven. Ask for Somebody in his stead, and you shall go in quite the contrary direction.

And yet, for the sake of Everybody, give me Somebody! I raise my voice in the wilderness for Somebody. My heart, as the ballad says, is sore for Somebody. Nobody has done more harm in this single generation

than Everybody can mend in ten generations. Come, responsible Somebody; accountable Blockhead, come!

BEATING AGAINST THE BARS.

I HAVE told in two sketches preceding this how, as a leader in the Baden revolution after the surrender of Rastadt, I became subject to the power of the Grand Duke and the Prince of Prussia; how I was imprisoned in the fortress, tried by court-martial, sentenced to be shot,—but not shot, because in the court that sentenced me there was one dissentient judge.* My sentence was changed to ten years in the house of correction; which seemed worse than death.

On the railway journey to my prison I had still some insults to suffer from young Prussian officers. At the station in Carlsruhe stood a great many gentlemen in white neckcloths, who probably came from a court dinner, and wished to enjoy the sight of a rebel in chains. "There are C. and his wife in that carriage," said one, and they all came and stared at me; but they saw no fetters. I sat among soldiers who behaved in a most friendly manner. There was nothing more melodramatic than the grief of my poor wife, holding my hand as she had done all the way. It was almost dusk when we arrived at Bruchsal. With a heavy heart I took leave of my true wife, and was conducted in the midst of soldiers through the town. The corporal of the escort did not know the locality; and the inhabitants, having more sympathy with conquered than with conqueror, took little pains to show where the house of correction was. After much erring to and fro we left the town by another gate, and reached a gloomy castellated building. We stopped at an iron grating in the wall.

"More than ten years?" asked the warder.

"No."

"You are wrong then," and he directed the way to the old house of correction. That was the first glimpse of my dungeon—the model prison on the separate and solitary system—in which six years of my period of durance were spent.

I had a fellow-sufferer on that first night in an artilleryman of Rastadt, who was taken with me into the guard-room of the old house, where two old people in light gray uniforms—gaolers on duty—received us, and led us to the presence of the governor. That officer gave a receipt for us to the corporal, and sent us for the night to the reception-room. My blood tingled when my whole person was handled and searched. But a peace-offering came in the shape of a supper of broth, which seemed to be composed of bad grease and potatoes, very much praised by the gaolers.

Not having been undressed for a long time, and having slept only on damp straw, I received the coarse but cleanly bed in the reception-room as a great luxury. At about nine o'clock next morning I was taken to the governor, a worthy man, who was unable to hide his resentment at the cruelty of the Prussians, in inflicting upon a gentleman the punishment of thieves. He prepared me for the ceremony of the prison toilette. On this representation, he said, Major M. and Captain S., who were his prisoners, received back their own clothes; but the Prussians, having heard of it, instantly remonstrated, and he was daily expecting orders to put them again into convicts' uniform. Carried off to the watch-room by a thickset gaoler—who had a harsh manner but was not an unkindly man—my beard was swept off by the razor, my hair was cropped by a prisoner, who danced about me like an imp while he was snipping and shearing; then, when he had made my head look like a shoe-brush, he leapt away. I was ordered to undress and put on the convict's uniform, which lay upon a bench ready to my hand. There was a pair of stockings coming high over the knee, and made of thick hemp-twine, hard as a grater; there was an ascetic shirt, large enough to be taken for a carter's frock, made of the coarsest hemp linen, that felt upon the skin as if there had been woven into it a bundle of toothpicks. This garment being quite new, and never having touched water, was so stiff and hard, that after an hour's wearing, it had scoured the skin of my whole body, till I seemed to wear a shirt of Nessus. The trousers were of the coarsest kind of hemp trellis, and the jacket of the same material. I thrust my arm in it too fast, and scraped a piece of the skin from my knuckles. The waistcoat and neckcloth were of like material, dyed with a bad blue. After I had put on a little hempen cap I thought the business concluded. But there lay on the form something else that was to belong to me. It looked like a sheet of gray pasteboard, but a red line running through it satisfied me that it was a tissue. I took it in my hand and unfolded it with difficulty. It was so stiff that it retained every form into which it was bent. I could not make out what this was, and asked its use; the gaoler who had been amused at my perplexity informed me that it was my pocket-handkerchief. The prisoners, I found, put these handkerchiefs in water, and then beat them with stones until it becomes possible to use them. There were next given to me a pair of very rough peasant shoes, a little wooden tablet with my number painted upon it, a small horn comb, and a towel.

I was then taken into the wool saloon, which was to be my future scene of labour. Thirty prisoners were at work, picking and spinning the wool, which filled the room—otherwise spacious and reasonably cheerful—with a fetid odour. The stillness, only

*See pages seventy-five and one hundred and forty of the present volume.

disturbed by the peculiar rattling of the large wool spinning-wheels; the repulsive faces of many of my new comrades; the whole house-of-correction atmosphere, made, quivering yet under the impression of the toilette, a very strong impression upon my mind. Everything whirled before my eyes.

By-and-by I recovered, and could look about. They had not, on that first day, given me any work. One of the convicts attracted me, with noble features and a high, beautiful forehead. It was Dr. K. of Heidelberg, spinning wool with the earnest mien of an old Roman senator. His neighbour to the right looked like a student; but he was an incendiary.

Near a spinning-wheel at the opposite side there stood a young man like a Theseus, with long-lashed eyes, and a mouth delicate as that of a girl; it was a young student of medicine from Mayence. He had been only three days in Baden, and, being ill while there, had never seen a fight, or carried arms. Intending to return to Mayence, he passed Heidelberg, and there he was arrested by a clever gendarme, who sagaciously concluded that the perfectly new cap he wore must have replaced quite recently the hat of a rebel. Young R. had indeed belonged to a patriotic corps which was formed in his native town, but had dispersed before it reached Baden. He was sentenced to imprisonment for ten years, like myself. After two years of punishment, he obtained pardon. His parents and relations being well off, spared no money, and applied it in the right directions.

In the afternoon, we were permitted to walk for half an hour in the yard. During this time I became acquainted by sight with many of my fellow patriots. Thousands of them still languished in the casemates; where they were perishing by hundreds, neglected and forlorn. The government of Baden showed so little concern in coming to a speedy end with the examinations, that only three judges were appointed to this business in Rastadt; where no less than five thousand six hundred accused men were held in durance.

At seven o'clock we had our supper. It consisted of a pint chopin of soup made of water, very mouldy black bread, and less than half an ounce of a detestable fat, called smear; generally used for the greasing of carriage-wheels. This horrible soup was not seldom given thrice a day—for breakfast, dinner, and supper. After supper, we proceeded directly to the bedroom; in which there might have been some forty beds. After the gaoler had said prayers for us all, he locked the door and went away. He could always look into the room by a wicket, where lights were burning all night.

I had managed to have my bed at the side of Dr. K., with nobody on the other side. K. had a mind to talk; but this was impossible to me. During all the day I had forcibly held back the tears; now I hid my head under the blanket, and wept like a child.

At half-past four in the morning we were awakened by the ringing of a bell. Everybody rose, and made his bed and his toilette. The latter was a curious proceeding; for it was a toilette without glasses, basins, tooth-brushes, or even soap. The washing apparatus for these forty people consisted simply in one tub of water and an empty tub, together with a small tin drinking-cup. Since, for the whole business, to forty persons, only a few minutes were allowed, our ablutions were always very incomplete.

After a prayer spoken by a gaoler, the workroom was opened, and we began our labour by the help of dim oil-lights. I was ordered attend a large spinning-wheel, and received a quantity of wool to convert into thread. One of the work-masters showed me how to proceed, and I began my task. When my wheel got entangled, my neighbour to the right came and put it in order, without speaking a word. This was a young Italian, who, in animated dispute, had thrust his knife into the body of a Baden subject. I could see how excitable he was. His blood was always in extraordinary motion, and when he came to help me he blushed like a girl.

My neighbour to the left was a venerable old poacher, who sometimes offered me stealthy pinches from his little bark snuff-box; and I could not find it in my heart to refuse this little kindness. The director had taken care to place me betwixt the two most honest knaves of his collection. Generally, the common criminal felt that the political offenders did not belong to their set. They forbore to show any intimacy; although all wore the same dress, and did the same work. If any one of us spoke to them, they were pleased, and showed their acknowledgments by many little services.

Before the breakfast, half loaves of very coarse black bread were brought in baskets, and, when the gaoler called a name, each of us went forth to fetch one. In the first days, I was always struck by my name as by a dagger-thrust. The bread was very bad, for it was mixed with common field-bean meal; but it was not safe to complain too loudly; a few common criminals who had done so having been punished. None being permitted to have knives, every one that desired to cut a bit of bread (one pound and a half was the daily allowance) had to go to one of the pillars, against which a blunt knife hung by a short chain.

The dinner at twelve o'clock consisted of a chopin of soup and a chopin of potatoes; lentils, peas, or another vegetable: meat was given only twice a week, four ounces at a time.

On the Saturday came a gaoler, and asked which of us desired to write a letter. I was of that number, for I had promised to my wife to write to her as soon as possible.

On Sunday we rose at half-past five o'clock, and had no work to do. We attended divine service in a long saloon, arranged like a church. In the afternoon, such of us as would write letters went to the guard-room. There, accordingly I sat, mixed with the refuse of human society, to write to my dear wife; whose name I would have thought sullied if spoken before them.

There was in Bruchsal a railway officer who had absconded with six thousand florins. After having spent the money he came back. He had his own clothes and his own room in the prison with many comforts, and was occupied with keeping the books of the management. A fraudulent watchmaker or jeweller worked on his own account in his own room; and such examples were by no means rare ones. This could not be through fraud or negligence in the director; for the prisons were visited every month by the members of the ministry. If criminals of this kind have a claim to milder treatment, how much greater claim had we, who became for the most part criminals from motives which should be the strength and not the weakness of a State? But after a time we obtained, through the representations that we made, much relaxation of the prison discipline. Yet, scarcely had we learnt to appreciate the bettering of our condition, when there happened to me a new trouble.

On Sunday, the thirtieth of September, a tavern-keeper of Bruchsal, involved in the revolution, was delivered in to our establishment. He was popular in Bruchsal, and in the afternoon about a hundred young fellows assembled in the town, and boasted they would free the prisoners. It was mere hectoring; but the Prussians and their obedient servants in Carlsruhe seized on this pretext to aggravate the punishment of certain of their enemies. Consequently, in the afternoon of the second of October five of us were called to the director, who received us with much agitation. He told us that he had received orders to send us immediately to the new model prison—the terrible cellular penitentiary.

A detachment of Nassau soldiers transported us in our slave-gear through the whole town, where many a pitying girl's eye met ours as we passed. The gaolers had told us many times of the new prison to which we were going; and with other things, that the prisoners there were obliged to wear visors.

We arrived; we entered. We were brought into a preparatory cell; where we studied with dismay the regulations of the house. Then we were separated, and I was led into a cell towards the north; where I was to live for years, away from other men, always alone. I lost even my human name, and became number two hundred and seventy-eight, enclosed within four bare walls, in a space four yards by six, under a ceiling like a coffin-lid. My little iron bed was chained against the wall. In one corner there was a little open cupboard with a pitcher, a table, a board, both fixed on the wall—and that was all. Of the whole prison it is enough to say that it is a costly massive structure contrived on the principle of that at Pentonville. It had not long been finished—indeed was not wholly finished—when I entered it. But of my pale yellow cell there are some things that I must narrate:—

The floor in the Bruchsal cells is covered with little square tiles, so soft that the prisoners sweep from them every morning more than a pint of the finest brick-dust, which penetrates everywhere, and of course gets into the lungs. To make this worse, the shoes of the prisoners are thick-set with large nails. Of late these shoes have been abolished, and a few of the floors have been painted with linseed oil; but this costs for every cell about two shillings, and the Baden government is not easily induced to expend so much on the mere health of prisoners.

Beneath the ceiling in one of the longer walls, a square hole is placed, through which comes in the hot air in the winter: corresponding to it is another such hole on the opposite side, but near the floor, intended to take bad air out. The theory of this heating and airing may be very good; but the practice proves very deficient. The openings work very often more after their own mind than after that of the inventor, one filling the cell with cold air, and the other spouting smoke.

The heating with hot air, the penetrating brick-dust, the bad water, and the draught always felt in the cell so strongly that the hair of the prisoner is moved by the wind even in bed, are the greatest calamities incident to prison life at Bruchsal from architectural reasons. It is a fact, that every plant dies in one of these cells after a short time, even in summer, and that a bird rarely will outlive a winter. Hot air is excellent for large halls in which people assemble now and then for a few hours; but it is murderous in such small closets. I will not dwell upon the decomposition of the air by this manner of heating, but only speak of the dryness produced by it. Every thing in the cell is dried to the utmost. The window-frames—which are of wood instead of cast-iron—are so much shrunk, that they let the draughts in freely, and with doors it is the same. A cloth saturated with water dries in a few minutes; and it is evident, that this dry air must operate in a like manner on the body of the prisoners. I leave it to physicians to tell what must be the consequence of exposure to this dry heat when combined as a state of suffering with bad and insufficient food. Hot air fills only half the cell; the breast and head of the prisoner are swimming in it, whilst the other half of the man moves in a cold current. The water comes from the hills

at the foot of which the prison is situated, and is led to every story by a conduit which is very much admired, but which has only the fault of being always out of order. In winter the pipes are frozen for months, and in summer, the water is dried up, or the pipes are subject to repair. On many a hot summer's day we had no water at all. Moreover, the water itself is bad; a few drops of vitriol put into a pint of it will produce a thick precipitate of plaster. If I dared to drink only a mouthful of it during the night, it always produced colic and diarrhœa.

The dress of the prisoners is the same as that of the old house of correction, with the exception of the head-dress. This consists here of a skull-cap of blue woollen cloth, to which is attached a very large visor, which covers the whole face, and in which are cut two holes to see through. This horrible cap must be worn always when the prisoner is not locked in his cell. When in the yard, the prisoners must be always fifteen paces distant from each other; and, if two of them meet by chance, this regulation causes a great embarrassment. The greatest crime in this prison is that two prisoners should speak to one another, or endeavour to communicate by any other means.

In every wing were employed five or six turnkeys, called at Bruchsal overseers. That one under whose care the directors very considerately placed me, was the best and most courteous in the house. It was indeed a comfort to me to be under the orders of this man; who behaved with the utmost delicacy. He was an old soldier, and blushed all over when he was compelled by his duty to show me how to use the spinning-wheel placed in my cell.

I have not space for an account of the routine of model prison life. The meat of the model dinner was allowed only upon alternate days, and the allowance then was two ounces of boiled beef! For breakfast, dinner, and supper together, government at that time paid to the managers daily a penny three-farthings; from which, provision was to be made not only for all the prisoners consumed, but also for servants' wages. Nevertheless, the woman who then was manager made money by the contract.

When I had been only two days in the house I was brought by the head overseer into his room, where I found my wife, my mother, and my only sister. The latter had come from the Prussian frontier. I had not seen her for twenty-seven years, and she had become a grandmother in that time. My mother I saw then for the last time. The expression of my poor wife's face in looking at me rent my heart. She had not seen me yet in my base dress, disfigured by the scissors and the razor. We thought this meeting a very sad one, and my situation as bad as possible: but in a few years later what would we not have given even for such a meeting? Only one visit in the month is permitted to the prisoner. It must be in the presence of an overseer and only of half-an-hour's duration.

When my wife was in Bruchsal she spoke to the director, and he proposed to the Council of Control several favours to be allowed to me; and, in consequence of this, I was permitted to wear woollen drawers; to shave myself; to have in my cell portraits and other not offensive pictures; to have flowers, even in pots, and to paint in oil; after having done half a day's work for the administration. The leave to paint in oil and to have flowers was of an immense value to me, and I became so cheerful with my occupation that my overseer was quite astonished.

When the director of all the prisons in Baden made me a visit, I asked leave of him to have my own lamps, instead of the smoking kitchen lamps then used, which I detested. But even he dared not to grant such an immense boon on his own responsibility, and was obliged to bring this important concern before the ministry; by whom it was allowed.

But all this was to be changed very soon for the worse. When Captain S—— fled from the old house of correction by help of his sister, who visited him; and who was, as was said, supported by the bribed head-overseer, all correspondence with our families and friends was prohibited, and their visits also were disallowed until the completion of the model parlour. Most of the favours granted to political prisoners by the Council of Control were annulled, and a reproof given to them into the bargain. They prohibited especially my painting in oil, because it was said to be against the seriousness of the place; but they permitted me to paint in water-colours. I never understood why water-colour painting was judged to be more serious than work in oil.

The Prussians, especially the officers, behaved as if they had conquered Baden. Their insolent and despotic manners were not liked at all, even by the Baden officers who had remained faithful to the old government. These had been living for many years under a constitution, and were shocked by Prussian tyranny. Besides, North German sharpness very seldom agrees with South German bonhommie.

Prisoners who never see for years a green tree or field are very excusable if they try to find means to get a stealthy peep out of their windows. So doing is forbidden, and if detected is punished. The Prussian sentries would have done well to report against such trespassers; but they had received orders to fire at them. Almost every day shots were heard in the court-yard, and many of the prisoners had narrow escapes. Of course the political convicts were very much shocked by such severity, and the better part among the officers of the house were shocked also.

Complaints were without purpose; on the contrary, the soldiers were praised by their officers, and it was only regretted that not one of these democrats was hit. Sometimes I saw the sentries hid behind some wood watching the window with their muskets ready, as if they were sportsmen stalking deer. Once I heard the report of a musket very near me, a cry, and then the tramping of many people, who seemed to be carrying a heavy burden. I afterwards was told, it was a poor prisoner employed to whitewash a cell. He was just about to replace the window, standing upon a step, when he was spied by a sentry and shot through the breast. The poor fellow had yet strength enough to descend the steps, and to set aside the window which he held in both his hands. Then he fell down, and died a few days afterwards. This atrocity was inexcusable, inasmuch as the sentry had been warned not to fire at prisoners who worked as masons in the cells.

This was not all our trouble. The sentries running up and down the courtyard, near and under the windows of the cells, used to call to one another in the night. Becoming aware that this calling vexed the prisoners, who were awakened by it, the sentries amused themselves by shouting all night, and as loudly as they could to the greatest vexation of us all. One night they did so in such a manner that the house was roused. They roared like madmen, animated to do so by a lieutenant who had just been visiting the guards. Several of the prisoners clambered to the windows, and one of the sentries shot at them without effect. At the same time I heard one of the prisoners angrily exclaim against the man who fired.

On the day following when all the highest officers of the prison had left for their dinner, and only the newly made head-overseers were present, there appeared in the establishment the Prussian military officer in command, accompanied by several officers, corporals, and a patrol with loaded muskets; two corporals had sticks in their hands. Major Von E. demanded, from the head overseer, the delivery of the inmates of three cells he pointed out, and whom he accused of having, on the previous night, insulted the sentries. The head overseer was perplexed, and did as the major ordered. By the noise in the courtyard the prisoners were attracted to the windows, in spite of the danger. The major, seeing this, invited them to come all to their windows, and see what he was about to do.

Three of the prisoners were then brought into the court-yard and barbarously caned in presence of the major and his suite. When the major after this heroic deed passed beneath my cell, I heard a laugh and my name: probably one of the officers regretted that I had not been one of the receivers of a drubbing. The director resented this infraction of his authority, and complained of it to his ministry in the most energetic manner. The result was that he was suddenly dismissed on the next excuse that could be met with.

That head overseer, who delivered the prisoners to the major, was a living memento of the tact of the Badish ministry. He had been a Badish lieutenant in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight, and was, in eighteen hundred and forty-nine, chosen captain. As such he participated in the revolution, and was present at most of the fights. Moreover he had good connections; and, when he was examined, he said that he had been forced by the soldiers to stay with his regiment. He was not only acquitted, but was placed as head overseer in a house of correction, where he was the superior of comrades and soldiers, with whom he had shared in the same crime. This man was neither a spy nor a bad man; I did not grudge him his good berth, but it was base to place him in it.

When my first overseer received promotion I was removed to another cell, where I had many overseers at hand, who did all they could for money, and who would have done more with a little courage. Through one of them I received a letter from a young girl of Bruchsal, Kate Z. the daughter of a butcher there, who offered me her services. I did not know her; but she gave herself much trouble to serve the political prisoners. Several of the overseers boarded at her father's house, and she knew how to persuade them.

Without the supply of food which I received through this channel, I do not know how I could have lived through the first half-year. Of the prison diet my stomach tolerated almost nothing but the soup, bad as it was, and I was always as hungry as a wolf. Once on the way to the yard, one of the overseers found an opportunity to give me a nice piece of boiled ham, wrapped in paper. I put it into the breast pocket of my jacket to eat when I returned into my cell; but this piece of ham burned more upon my heart than almost anything I ever had upon it. My mouth began to water like that of a well-behaving dog, who is kept long expectant of a morsel. At last canine appetite overcame every sense of shame or even caution; I hid myself as well as I could, and bit into the ham with an eagerness that would have done honour to any beast.

By the care of my friend Kate, who was provided with money by my devoted wife, I was at this time very well served. I received every morning coffee or chocolate quite hot in a flat brandy bottle, and held warm in the breast of the overseer, who ran with it from the town to the prison as fast as he could. Sometimes I had wine, meat, and even cigars and newspapers. By one of these people, whom I paid very well, of course, I received every morning a written report of everything that occurred in the house, and what he had heard of other political prisoners. By this

means I gained a knowledge of all circumstances, and of the construction of the house itself, which was necessary to effect my flight; for which all preparations were completed by the spring of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-one.

By chance I saw in the room of the head overseer a plan of the prison, and this helped me very much to plan my project. The more I brooded over it the more its practicability became obvious; till, at last, I came to the resolution not to go alone, but to free all the political prisoners in spite of all the Prussians. The plan was bold but the easier for its boldness, and was by no means impracticable. Mischances frustrated it at last, and therefore I need not narrate it in detail.

After the flight of Captain S—— all intercourse with my wife was forbidden for a time; but, after the finishing of the model parlour, I consulted the director, and wrote to her to come and see me. She may tell herself the adventures of this little journey. I will give again an extract of her diary:—

"February 26th. I rose too late to go by the first train, as I intended to see my Mannheim friends; but to this delay I owe the accompaniment of Fritzchen (Friederica, a friend of ours) and her little Helena. The journey seemed to me very long; I could think of nothing else but how I would find you, my dear husband; the saddest imaginations pursuing me. When I arrived in the hotel at Bruchsal it was yet day, and I dared not to go for Kate. At last it grew dark; and, putting on an old hood, I ventured into the street. I had the good luck to find Kate.

"Feb. 27th. I rose early and went out to buy flowers for you before going to the prison; for those I had brought with me were two days old and faded. I also wished to buy an ivy in a pot, that you might have something fresh and living in your solitary cell. It was half past eight when I was about to leave my room with Fritzchen and the child, when two policemen came and asked for my passport. I told them, that I had neither passport nor other papers, my husband being a prisoner and having been plundered by the Prussians and others of his property and papers. The policemen went away to the commandant of Bruchsal, but came very soon back, bringing with them a written order, by which I was not permitted to leave my room before four o'clock in the afternoon, being a prisoner till further orders. No reason was mentioned. Upon this I was induced to go myself to the captain. The policemen would not suffer me to leave the room and hotel; they even held Fritzchen, (who first overstepped the threshold), by her arm and gown; but she abused them so, that they became uncertain, and lost the courage to retain by force such a beautiful and angry woman. Moreover, they followed us close. The commandant was very polite, excused himself for fulfilling the duty of office; but abided by the execution of the order. It was only with much trouble I persuaded him to go and see Director D——, and to consult with him, whether it would be too dangerous to permit me an interview with my unfortunate husband. Very soon he came into the hotel and told me that I could go to the prison, but only accompanied by the policemen.

"I went directly, but I inquired in vain for flowers. The nearer the moment came to see you, the more sorrowful I became, and my heart throbbed more vehemently. Moreover, the thought that I must not increase your sorrow by showing mine; but on the contrary try to inspire you with courage, gave me strength. Sometimes I scarcely could believe that you were indeed in a House of Correction; it seemed to me like an old dream.

"When we reached the prison and entered the room of the porter, I asked for the director, to ask why he had expressly forbidden my friend Fritzchen to see my husband. I think it was because he believed Fritzchen's husband to have written a paper against solitary imprisonment; but he was not to be seen. Close to the room of the porter is the parlour, and connected with it by two doors. That through which the overseer (whose duty it is to be present at an interview) enters, has glass windows; the other door led to another compartment of the room, which is limited by a barrier and a network of wire. A third compartment, likewise limited by a barrier and railing, is to be entered from the inside of the prison by a massive iron door. Being in the porter's room, I saw my husband in this compartment, through the windows of the door. When the overseer entered his compartment, situated between the two others, I followed him closely to give to my husband my hand; but without pity I was pushed back and ushered through the other door into that part of the parlour destined for the visitor.

"O, this parlour is one of the most cruel inventions! I am not able to express in words the torture of the mind endured in these few minutes. During only half-an-hour the wives, parents, or children of a prisoner are permitted to see him. Every fond word is restrained by the presence of a gaoler, whose face is showing his impatience as he counts time by the strokes of the clock and not by those of the heart. O, this was a painful, frightful parting—heartrending to see my poor Otto, thy pale face, thy mournful eyes, and thy compressed colourless lips! It was a moment in which to become mad with grief. What horrible thoughts thronged at once to the mind. To see a loved being descend again living into his grave? Will he ever come back—and if he comes, how will he be? Perhaps, with a sickly body: probably a disturbed mind—a broken man.

"At about four o'clock the commandant came to my hotel, and told me that I could depart as soon as I wished; but that, till then, I was to keep my room, guarded by a policeman, and that I must suffer myself to be accompanied as far as the frontier of Baden by a gendarme. I would depart, I said, next morning, and wrote a letter to you, which I requested Fritzchen to convey to Kate; but, when she moved to leave the room, she found herself a prisoner like me. I sent the letter by the waiter, and had the good fortune to receive your answer the same evening."

The two ladies were indeed accompanied by a gendarme, after the manner usual when any vagabond is brought by "schul" (shore) over the frontier; a wanton insult against a woman which might easily have been avoided. My wife was forbidden to go to Baden without leave from the Prince of Prussia or the General von Schreckenstein.

My preparations for escape were ripening. I had keys and many necessary implements. Apparently, nothing remained wanting but the removal of some bars from an unguarded cellar window. A female friend of mine passing through Frankfort, had told my wife—who then lived in that town—that she would venture to saw through, during the night, the iron bars which separated me from liberty; that she would surely do it for me when she came back from a certain necessary journey. My wife, thinking she could do as much as any other woman, determined at once to undertake this perilous adventure herself; but she did not break her intention to any one; knowing very well that her parents and friends would have restrained her from an undertaking, which they would have called sheer madness. In truth the undertaking was an extremely dangerous one; for she would meet with death or worse, if detected by the Prussians. But whenever did a true wife reflect on danger, when a husband could be saved? My wife forgot not only danger, but many necessary things also; and, when she left Frankfort, her plan was but traced in confused outlines.

Not being permitted to enter the duchy of Baden in her own character, she set off at four o'clock, in the afternoon, riding in the third class, in mean clothes. In the carriage she met a poor Jewish pedlar woman, who lived near the Baden frontier, and was on her journey home. My wife proposed to buy her basket with everything in it, and also a black, frontlet to disguise her better; for she desired, as she said, to make a jest with some of her friends. The poor woman was very glad to get rid of her basket and the worsted, on my wife's promising to replace them, if possible, to which end she noted the Jew woman's address.

With this frontlet and basket, my wife could act the part of a Jewess—none the worse for being the daughter of an Italian, and having upon her face the rich tints of the glowing south.

Arrived at a certain station, my wife stepped out, and met, in a village not far from Bruchsal, a young man recommended by Kate as an enthusiastic and trustworthy admirer of the political prisoners. He was eagerly willing to be serviceable; but recommended saying nothing of the flight to Kate, who was a chatterbox; although a very good girl. He knew some old people who had a room to spare; and, after having bespoken everything necessary, my wife went away to try whether she could get this room. For a silk neckerchief and a few ribbons she succeeded.

Then she prepared for action, and set right her watch-spring saws, and the black wax which was to conceal the cuts made in the bar. The old people of the house went very soon to bed, and slept soundly when my wife's young helpmate gave the appointed signal. She left her room stealthily, and also the cottage, and met the young man. It was past ten, and the night dark and rainy—just such a night as was best adapted for the execution of her purpose. At about eleven o'clock the prison was reached, and my deliverers could hear the regular steps of the sentries on the wall. The houses now standing before the entrance of the prison were then only partly built, and not inhabited at all. Protected by the darkness of the night, my wife advanced along a ditch at the foot of the external wall, till she came to the gate, at the sides of which were to be seen the important cellar air-holes. Her companion remained behind; for she would not involve him any farther in an enterprise which might make him unhappy for life.

She began sawing, but this was no easy work. It was not to be done by her with those little flexible saws, especially in the darkness, and agitated as she was. She cut more deeply into her own fingers than into the iron bar; and, at last, left off working, and met her companion; not quite dissatisfied for she had seen how negligently the house was guarded, and that it really was possible to succeed with better implements.

When she returned to Frankfort, she spoke to the locksmith who had made the keys for me, and told him what she had been about. He laughed much, and gave her instructions how to proceed better with a certain old saw, which he boasted could cut iron like wood. Thereafter, my wife spoilt all the bars in the cellar air-holes in her father's house, to try whether she could cut them without noise, and how much time she would want for her purpose.

Whilst my brave wife thus was employed, I, to my great vexation, was removed to another wing of the prison. I succeeded in carrying away with me my keys, saws, and other things; but was very much puzzled

when I saw that in my new cell the old hiding-place was wanting. It cost some little ingenuity to find another. Afterwards, my cell and clothes were suddenly changed. Taken by surprise, I lost both tools, keys, and money, and the hope of escape with them.

Furthermore, my friend Kate and her whole family had been arrested; for, during a house-visitation, several letters from prisoners had been found which that foolish girl had kept, notwithstanding my often-repeated request to her to burn every bit of paper that came out of prison. Vanity—or some kindlier thought—induced her to keep scraps from each of us; probably to show that she was a friend to men, who were then very popular. The poor girl was very much cast down; for her imprudence had brought ruin upon her family. By law, there was not much to be done against them: but the government has many means of punishing poor tradespeople. Kate's father was a butcher, and had to deliver meat to the soldiers; this charge was not only taken from him, but even the soldiers and other people connected with the government were forbidden, or, at least, induced, to keep away from his shop. Kate was confined for some time in prison. My wife caused the law-expenses to be paid, and gave help out of her own pocket; although I had nothing to do with the detection of Kate's dealings, and she came only into trouble by her own imprudence. The poor thing did not recover from her fright, and died a few years afterwards; very soon followed by her father, who ended his days as a ruined man.

From this time I was determined to induce no person inside the prison, or outside, to endanger himself for my benefit. Others were not so conscientious, and the new director caused to be chased away, in about three years, no less than forty-six overseers, most of them only on suspicion.

Thus far I have told of the solitary prisoner—immured for love of freedom—beating for escape against his prison-bars. But there belong other and gentler features to his destiny; there are other ways—some simple and some strange—in which humanity asserts itself against all odds. Life in the cell has two different sides. I have here shown only one side. My narrative will be complete when I have shown also the other.

TIMBER-BENDING.

"You may break, but you cannot bend me," is a phrase that has hitherto been applied indiscriminately to persons who are either very heroic or very obstinate. It has also been applied to certain woods, such as oak and lignum vitæ. A great deal of braggadocio has been put into the unconscious mouths of trees (if, by a figure of speech, we may talk of trees having mouths at all) about the stubbornness of heart of oak, and about the monarch of the forest never yielding to the storm; which, indeed, he seldom does, unless absolutely torn up by the roots; although Shakespeare, who was not a bad observer, talks of the wind making "flexible the knees of knotted oaks." But, in plain truth setting sentiment aside, the unyielding nature of timber has been one of its disadvantages for many practical and scientific purposes. Give a bar of iron to a smith, or place a mass of material under the gentle persuasion of Nasmyth's steam hammer—and you may have what you will made out of it. You may have it moulded like clay by the hand of the potter; may expand it, or contract it; shape it and reshape it; twist and contort it; bend it into a sword or a ploughshare, an anchor or a rifle-barrel, a column for some airy yet substantial palace, or a girder for a suspension bridge. You may lengthen it into a line of rails for the swift passage of steam, or a Menai tunnel to span an arm of the sea, like some gigantic bracelet. Subject metal to the furnace, and you have a fluid stream, whereof you may cast an Iron Duke, or any other shape of man or god you please. Sullen and hard at first sight, this ductile substance is your very slave, in fact; a genie of the mine, who waits your bidding to do wonders; a Proteus, to whom is given the power to change into a thousand forms. Not so has it been with wood. Place a piece of timber under the hammer, and it is shivered into fragments; give it to the furnace, and it is consumed. You may saw and join it; you may carve it into fantastic and beautiful designs; but you have not hitherto been able to use it with that facile manipulation which belongs to metal.

One result of this deficiency has been a great circumscribing of the uses to which timber might be put; another result has been excessive waste of material. When, in building a house or a ship, or in making a piece of furniture, it has been found necessary to employ a bar of wood of a curved shape, there were no means at one time of obtaining this curve, but by searching for a branch which was naturally bent in growing (and which, of course, could be met with only rarely) or by cutting a solid mass of timber into the required form. In the latter process all the outlying parts of the wood—all those portions not included in the curve itself—were wasted, or were only available for very trivial purposes; for the curve, extending across the block and dividing it, would leave only small fragments of the material, of useless shapes, on each side. In the case of metal, the process is easy and obvious enough; you have merely to take a straight bar, heat it, place it beneath the hammer, and coerce it into the needful convexity. Metal, therefore, has had an immense advantage over timber on the very important grounds of facility and

economy; for, in the one case, you only use precisely what you want, while in the other you use more than you want. When Mr. Jones, having reached the summit of his earthly desires in obtaining the consent of Miss Smith to marry him (and also the consent of Mr. Pater Smith, and Mrs. Mater Smith), looks out for tables, chairs, and other et ceteras, wherewith to furnish that desirable cottage residence in which the happy couple are to take up their abode in the company of love and a young servant, he pays more for these household comforts (meaning thereby, the tables, chairs, &c.) than he otherwise would pay, because of the waste of material necessitated in their construction. The case, however, is not now as it was formerly. In a happy moment, some mechanical genius bethought him of a process of bending timber by the application of heat to it.

Like the Reform Bill, however, it was only a step; and, if any old toryfied engineer with a dream of finality in his mind, had regarded the success already achieved as the summum bonum of such matters, Mr. Jones—not to speak of Mrs. Jones—would have had a right to quarrel with him. For Jones might have called his attention to the fact that the timber had a tendency to a debilitated constitution, very awkward in those articles of furniture whereof the first requisite is strength; that it was weak and fragile, not unfrequently breaking under a moderate pressure, and sometimes absolutely unbending and returning to primitive straightness, like a young lady's carefully got-up curls on a damp day. All this Mr. Jones might have exhibited out of direful experience; but, of the reason—the cause of the effect—he would probably have been ignorant. The explanation, however, is not very abstruse. In the ordinary process of bending, the fibre is strained. Thus, any curved piece of wood is weakest in the sharpest part of the curve. Scientific men, indeed, have argued that, for practical purposes, great curves are impossible; and they have defined their theory thus:—To bend a piece of wood, you must extend the outer circumference and compress the inner. Now as wood is inexpansible, you cannot bend it without injuring the fibre, and consequently weakening the whole mass.

Such was the orthodox theory; but, in the same way that the knowing ones on the race-course often make the most astounding mistakes in their forecastings to their own great pecuniary disadvantage and the edification of a censorious world, so will it frequently occur that professed scientific men, too mindful of abstract theories to make practical innovations, find themselves suddenly confronted with some new application of those theories, or some complete reversal of them. These audacious exhibitions of scientific heterodoxy have of late years been more common in America than elsewhere. The active, volatile, knowing States' man is as little disposed to submit to antiquated authority in intellectual matters as in political affairs. He will not have an hereditary monarchy, guarded with fictions of divine right in the regions of discovery, any more than in the physical territories which he occupies. He will have an elective president in the Republic of Ideas; and he will reserve to himself entire liberty to set him aside when his time for being useful has gone by. Every man in that republic shall have a vote; and the best candidate shall carry the day. Therefore has it come to pass that Jonathan, disregarding the assertion that wood cannot be bent without weakening the fibre, has set to work to see how he can overcome the difficulty, and has discovered a method which, to judge from the accounts given by the most eminent engineers, both of America and England, will be of the greatest service in ship-building and domestic architecture, and in the construction of all pieces of furniture in which it is necessary to employ curved timber. It has been already so employed in the United States, where a Roman Catholic cathedral is surmounted by a dome fashioned out of wood bent by the new process. This dome has been found to be lighter, stronger, cheaper, and more elegant, than the domes usually formed of metal, brick, and papier-maché.

By this invention, which has been patented in America, and is now just introduced into England, the strength of the wood is increased at least seventy-five per cent. at the point where strength is most required. The curve, moreover, never relaxes. The timber, as in the old process, is first subjected to the influence of steam, which softens the whole mass, and puts it in a fit state for the action of a machine. The principle of bending, as employed in this new application, is based on end-pressure, which, in condensing and turning at the same time, destroys the capillary tubes by forcing them into each other. These tubes are only of use when the tree is growing; and their amalgamation increases the density of the timber, the pressure being so nicely adjusted that the wood is neither flattened nor spread, nor is the outer circumference of the wood expanded, though the inner is contracted. Now, the error of the former process, as expounded by competent judges, has arisen from the disintegrating of the fibre of the wood by expanding the whole mass over a rigid mould. Wood can be more easily compressed than expanded; therefore, it is plain that a process which induces a greater closeness in the component parts of the piece under operation—which, as it were, locks up the whole mass by knitting the fibres together—must augment the degree of hardness and power of resistance. The wood thus becomes almost impervious to damp and to the depredations of insects, while its increased density renders

it less liable to take fire; and the present me hod of cutting and shaping timber being superseded, a saving of from two to three-fourths of the material is brought about. The action of the machine throws the cross-grains into right angles; the knots are compelled to follow the impulse of the bending; the juices are forced out of the cells of the wood, and the cavities are filled up by the interlacing fibres. In the same way, you may sometimes see in the iron of which the barrels of muskets are made a kind of dark grain which indicates that the particles of the metal, either in the natural formation or in welding, have been strongly clenched in one another. These specimens are always greatly valued for their extraordinary toughness, as well as for a certain fantastical and mottled beauty.

Another of the good results of this new method is that the wood is seasoned by the same process as that which effects the bending. The seasoning of wood is simply the drying of the juices, and the reduction of the mass to its minimum size before it is employed, so that there shall be no future warping. But, as we have already shown, the compression resorted to in the American system at once expels the sap; and a few hours are sufficient to convert green timber into thoroughly seasoned wood. Here is an obvious saving of time, and also of money; for the ordinary mode of seasoning, by causing the wood to lie waste for a considerable period, locks up the capital of the trader, and of course enhances the price to the purchaser. Time also will be saved in another way, in searching for pieces of wood of the proper curve for carrying out certain designs. "How delighted," says Mr. Jervis, the United States' inspector of timber, "will the shipwright be to get clear of the necessity of searching for crooked pieces of timber! There need no longer be any breaking of bats in the frame, as we have been wont to break them. We shall see numbers one, two, and three futtocks, at least, all in one piece." An English engineer (Mr. Charles Mayhew) remarks that one of the advantages of the American method is that, "in its application to all circular, wreathed, or twisted work, it not only preserves the continuous grain of the wood, which is now usually and laboriously done by narrow slips of veneer glued on cores cut across the grain, with many unsightly joints, ill concealed at best; but it will materially reduce the cost of all curved work, which now varies, according to the quickness of the sweep, and will give the artist greater freedom in his design, by allowing him to introduce lines which are now cautiously avoided in order to prevent the cost of their execution." Dr. Hooker, Mr. Fairbairn, Mr. Rennie, Mr. Galloway, civil engineer, and other eminent scientific men, confirm these judgments. A specimen of bent oak now lies before us, and exhibits a beautiful continuity in the sweep of the fibres.

Timber-bending has reached a new stage of development; and it is not too much to anticipate that it will have considerable influence on the industrial arts.

THE ANGEL OF LOVE.

On noiseless wing, one starry night,
From her blest home above,
Down, dove-like, came that angel bright,
Whose care is human love.

A rose upon her bosom lay,
Fresh cull'd from Eden's bowers;
Unlike the rose, whose sweets decay
On this sad earth of ours.

Within its cup is found a balm
For love's severest pain;
Desponding hearts to raise and calm,
And give them hope again.

Where Jordan's tranquil waters shine
Beneath the sun's warm rays,
Two sisters fair, of Hebrew line,
Had pass'd their quiet days.

In mutual love and virtue blest,
They scarce had dream'd of woe,
Till hopeless passion marr'd their rest,
And forced their tears to flow.

Both loved, alas! a Christian knight:
Both shared an equal pain:
For Christian vow no Jew may plight,—
They knew they loved in vain!

Nor angry thought, nor envious strife
Stirred either gentle breast:
Each would have yielded love and life
To make the other blest.

The gracious Angel was not slow
Those maidens' griefs to feel,
Nor ever wept for human woe
She did not strive to heal.

The sisters watch'd in speechless dread
Her radiant form appear:
"Fear not; my name is Love," she said,
"And peace my mission here.

"No sigh, how faint, how sad soe'er,
Is heard in vain on high:
A balm of power divine I bear
To soothe and sanctify.

"To her who loves with deepest love,
This flower of life be given;
It has been rear'd by saints above,
And bath'd in dews of Heaven."

The Angel to the elder spake:
"What can'st thou, wilt thou do,
Or bear, for thy beloved one's sake,
To prove thy love is true?"

"Oh, doubt it not," the maiden cried;
"All joys would I resign,
So I were sometimes at his side,
And dared to call him mine!

"My father's land, my sister's home,
Mine ancient creed forego,
With him on distant shores to roam,
And share his weal and woe!

"No other bliss below—above—
No other hope be given!
Life were not life without his love,
And, with it, earth were heaven!"

The Angel to the younger spake:
"What, maiden, wilt thou do
Or suffer, for thy loved one's sake,
To prove thy love is true?"

"I love him well," the maid replied,
"And much would I resign,
To be for ever at his side,
And know his heart was mine.

"My father's creed is dearer yet,—
Mine ancient race and name:
Then break, my heart! ere I forget
The Israel, whence I came.

"Yet, though my vows I may not break
To share his happier fate,
To deeds of love, for his loved sake,
My days I consecrate.

"No other love this heart shall share,
To his for aye consign'd,—
No thought of evil enter where
His image is enshrined!

"But I the sick and poor will tend,
My life an offering make
In trust—that Heaven on him may send
A blessing for my sake!"

The Angel smiled: "The rose is thine;
Such love is love indeed:
So love—so live; and love divine,
Eternal be thy meed!"

MOTHER SHIPTON.

THERE are some names which attain a national celebrity without posterity knowing exactly why or wherefore. That of Mother Shipton is one of the most noted in the traditionary annals of this country. Her fame as a prophetess has extended throughout the land; and her sayings have become, in the remotest corners, literally Household Words.

Undoubtedly there have been witches—for in that category must Mother Shipton be classed—who have played the oracle as well as she; but, as generally happens, the multitude are lost sight of in the course of time, and the wisdom of the many is eventually ascribed to one. Homer, Æsop, Solomon—to say nothing of that friend of the destitute, Joe Miller—are amongst a thousand instances of concentrated reputation. Every hour's experience, indeed, affords example of this tendency to special attribution; and there are very few of us, perhaps, who have not, at one time or other, contributed our mite to set up the popular sect of the day.

During a recent excursion in one of the midland counties, the consideration of this question was forced upon me by a local legend of which Mother Shipton was the heroine, although nothing exists to show that she ever set her foot on the spot, and more than three hundred years have elapsed since her death. But, before I add the stone I have gathered, to the general heap, it may not be out of place to relate the history and prophecies of this remarkable woman, as I have found them recorded in pamphlets now somewhat scarce.

Ursula Shipton, whose maiden name was Southiel, was born near Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, on the sixth of July, fourteen hundred and eighty-eight: three years after the accession of Henry of Richmond to the throne of England. She was baptised by the Abbot of Beverley, and probably an uglier child was never held at the font—a contemporaneous account stating that "her stature was much larger than common, her body crooked, and her face frightful." But, as a set-off to her personal deformity, her understanding is spoken of as having been extraordinary; and it was probably for this reason—certainly not because of her beauty—that Ursula's hand was sought in marriage when she had reached the age of twenty-four. Her suitor, a bold fellow to venture on such a strong-minded woman, was one Toby Shipton, of the village of Skipton, not far from York. He was, by profession, a builder, though whether he added anything to the architectural glories of the Minster, or acquired a Pecksniffian celebrity for edifices which he never helped to raise, is a point on which no information has been obtained. His fame rests entirely on the fact of his having bestowed his name on the bewitching Ursula; for, with that exception, we hear nothing at all about him. Of two things, one, as the French say. Toby Shipton either crawled through life the most henpecked of husbands, or shuffled off his mortal coil after a very brief season of conjugal felicity. The last hypothesis is the more likely.

I am ignorant at what period of her life the gift of prophecy descended upon Mother Shipton, but, hazarding a conjecture, I should say it was as soon as she discovered the mastery she had acquired over the minds of those around her. Her first prophetic essays were probably a few ambiguous words based on shrewd observation, the results of which naturally came to pass. Her speeches then assumed a darker meaning, chance proving the issue, or the obscurity in which they were couched leaving the event only doubtful. One lucky hit in matters of prognostication is always better remembered than a hundred failures. It is a common thing to make mistakes; a rare one to be right. Mother Shipton seems to have been a most successful soothsayer, and with the accomplishment of those predictions which concerned her own neighbourhood her reputation spread, until, it is said, it filled the whole land; and even bluff King Harry quaked with dread when he heard the words of Ursula. The most striking story that is told of her vaticinations has reference to the fate of his great minister, Wolsey, and that of those of the monarch's most distinguished

favourites. In a small volume in the British Museum, which merits the particular description of it which I shall afterwards give, that story is thus narrated:

"The Prophesie of Shipton's Wife in the time of King Henry the Eight.

"When she heard that King Henry the Eighth should be king, and Cardinall Wolsey should be at Yorke, she said that 'Cardinall Wolsey should never be at Yorke,' which the king and cardinall hearing, being angry, sent the Duke of Suffolk and Lord Darcy to her, who came with their men disguised to the king's house near York, where, leaving their men, they went to Mr. Besly, in York, and desired him to goe with them to Mother Shipton's house,* where, when they came, they knocked at the doore. She said, 'Come in, Mr. Besly, and those honourable lords with you;' and Mr. Besly would have put in the lords before him, but she said, 'Come in, Mr. Besly; you know the way best, they doe not.' This they thought strange, that she should know them and never saw them; then they went into the house where there was a great fire, and they dranke and were merry." (Mother Shipton was, at all events, no curmudgeon.) "'Mother Shipton,' said the duke (not altogether requiting her hospitality), 'if you knew what we came about, you would not bid us so welcome;' shee said, 'The messenger should not be hanged.' 'Mother Shipton,' said the duke, 'you said the cardinall should never see Yorke;' 'Yea,' said shee, 'I said he might see Yorke, but never come at it.' 'But,' said the duke, 'when he comes to Yorke thou shalt be burned;' 'Wee shall see that,' said she, and plucking her handkercher off her head, she threw it into the fire, and it would not burne; then she took her staffe and turned it into the fire, and it would not burne; then she tooke and put it on againe. 'Then,' said the duke, 'what mean you by this?' She replyed, 'If this had burned, I might have burned.' 'Mother Shipton,' quoth the duke, what thinke you of me?' 'My lord,' said she, 'the time will come you will be as low as I am, and that will be a low one indeed.' My Lord Piercy said, 'And what say you of me?' 'My lord,' said shee, 'shooe your horse to the quick, and you shall do well, but your body will be buried in Yorke pavement, and your head shall be stolen from the Barre, and carried into France;' at which they all laughed, saying, 'that would be a great lop between the head and the body.'" (A marginal note here says: "This proved true, for hee rose in rebellion in the north; and by not flying when hee might, hee was taken and beheaded in Yorke, where his body was buried, and his head was stolen and carried into France, tempore Eliz. Reg.") "Then said Darcy, 'And what think you of me?' She said, 'You have made a great gunne, shoot it off, for it will never doe you any good; you are going to warre, you will paine many a man, but kill none.' So they went away. Not long after, the cardinall came to Cawood, and going to the top of the tower, he asked, where stands York, and how far it was thither; and said that one said he should never see Yorke. 'Nay,' said one, 'she said you might see Yorke, but never come at it.' He vowed to burn her when he came to York. Then they showed him York, and told him it was but eight miles thence, and he said that he would soone be there; but being sent for by the king, he dyed on his way to London, at Leicester, of a luske. And Shipton's wife said to Mr. Besly, 'Yonder is a fine stall built for the cardinall in the Minster, of gold, pearle, and precious stones, goe and present one of the pillars to King Henry;' and he did so."

In this alleged prophecy by Mother Shipton, all the principal conditions were fulfilled; the discrepancies in the story are to be laid at the door of the narrator. After Henry the Eighth had plundered his minister, and banished him to his diocese, Wolsey, travelling by slow stages, finally established himself at Cawood, preparatory to making his entry into York, for the purpose of installation.

He went thither from Scroby, a house belonging to his see, about the end of September, fifteen hundred and thirty, and the ceremony of installation was fixed for Monday, the first of November, following. On the preceding Friday, however, the Earl of Northumberland arrived with order from the king to arrest him on a charge of high treason. He was at once removed in custody from Cawood, and he died at Leicester on his way to London: he certainly never entered York.

Of the three lords who visited Mother Shipton as the tradition relates, and were too curious concerning their own fortunes, the Duke of Suffolk was executed in fifteen hundred and fifty-four, for his share in Courtenay's insurrection, which precipitated the fate of Lady Jane Grey. Sir Thomas Percy (the Lord Percy of the legend) suffered, in fifteen hundred and thirty-six, for participating in Aske's rebellion, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace; and Lord Darcy, who was implicated in the same rising, was beheaded on Tower Hill. Respecting these noblemen, it will be observed that, with the exception of the special warning addressed to Percy, ambiguity of phrase was Mother Shipton's great resource. As a time must have come for all men to die, the death of the Duke of Suffolk would necessarily bring him some day as low as herself; and the prediction concerning Lord Darcy was as vague as astrology itself could have framed it. With regard to the more precise indication of Percy's fate, I am afraid something was subsequently

* It was one of what were called the "Dring" houses.

added to the dark speech of the prophetess by those who remembered in what manner he actually died. But whether the wife of Shipton (as she is modestly styled) uttered the words set down for her or not, the association of her name with such high personages affords evidence, at all events, of the repute in which she was popularly held.

Of all her contemporaneous admirers Mr. Besly seems to have been the most devoted and the most favoured. It was to him the great lords addressed themselves before they ventured to approach Dame Ursula's habitation; and he it was who knew the way in, which the rest did not. I look upon Besly as a sort of semi-wizard, who was in the habit of shutting up his shop in the Micklegate earlier than his neighbours, in order to go and pass his evenings with Mother Shipton—Toby being defunct—and propitiating her with a horn-handle to her stick of his own workmanship, he being, probably, a dealer in horn-ware, combs, lanthorns, drinking-utensils, and so forth; but propitiating her still more by the rapt attention which he gave to her prophecies, and the leading questions by which he brought them out. And it is, no doubt, to Besly that we are indebted for the preservation of such of the sayings of the wife of Shipton as are extant. I infer so much, as well from what has already appeared as from what more I propose to take from the curious volume already mentioned. It proceeds thus:

"Mr. Besly seeing these things fall out as she had foretold" (this is not absolutely the fact, if it be true as is generally stated, that Mother Shipton died in fifteen hundred and fifty-one, three years before the Duke of Suffolk) "desired her to tell him some more prophecies." The old lady opened upon him like a flood-gate. "Mr. Besly," said she, "before that Owse bridge and Trinity Church meet, they shall build in the day and it shall fall in the night, untill they get the highest stone of Trinity steeple to be the lowest stone of Owse bridge." The editor of this collection of prophecies, acting as chorus throughout, gives a note of explanation here: "This came to passe; for Trinity steeple in Yorke was blown downe with a tempest, and Owse bridge was broken down with a great flood; and what they did with repairing the bridge in the day-time with the stone of the steeple fell down in the night, until they remembering the prophesie, laid the highest stone of the steeple for foundation of the bridge, and then the worke stood. And by this was partly verified another of Mother Shipton's prophesies, viz., That her maid should live to drive her cow over Trinity steeple."

A mystical announcement of wide-spreading evil came next:

"The day will come that the North shall rue it wondrous sore, but the South shall rue it for evermore; when Hares kindle on cold hearth-stones; and lads shall marry ladies and bring them home; then shall you have a yeare of pining, hunger, and then a dearth without Corne, a woful day shall be seene in England, a King and a Queene." Chorus observes upon this: "Supposed to be meant by suppression of Abbies and other religious houses; and at the Lord Wil. Howard's house at Naworth, a Hare came and kindled in his kitchen upon his hearth." Very good, but how about the king and queen? Did she mean Philip and Mary? But the prophecy seems to have been left unfinished. Perhaps it was too much for the nerves of Mr. Besly!

Mother Shipton next tried her hand at this story.

"The first coming of the King of Scots shall be at Holgate town, but he shall not come in through the Barre, and when the King of the North shall be at London, his tayle shall be at Edinborough." Says the interpreter: "This was fulfilled in K. James comming in (to York); for such multitudes of people stood at Holgate bar to behold him that, to avoid the presse, he was forced to ride another way." Respecting the latter part of the prophecy, he observes: "When K. James was at London, his children were at Edinbrough, preparing to come to England."

Domestic subjects follow:—"After this shall water come over Owse bridge, and a windmill shall be set on a tower; and an elme tree shall lie at every man's doore; and at that time women shall wear great hats and great bands." Chorus remarks: "This is verified by the conducting of water into Yorke streets through bored elmes; and the conduit-house hath a windmill on the top that draws up the water." Of the women's great hats and bands he says nothing: they were, probably, not so remarkable as the great petticoats of the present day.

"And when," continues Ursula, "there is a lord-mayor at Yorke, let him beware of a stab. When two knights shall fall out in the castle yard, they shall never be kindly all their lives after. When all Colton hath borne crops of corne, seven yeares after you shall heare newes, then shall two judges goe in and out at Walmgate barre." Here follow the commentaries: "A lord-mayor, whose house was in the Minster yard in York, was killed with three stabs. Sir T. Wentworth and Sir John Savill, in choosing knights in the shire, in the castle yard at Yorke, did so fall out that they were never well reconciled. Colton hagge, in her time, was woodland ground, full of trees, which bore corne seven yeares, and the seventh yeare after this was the yeare of the cumming in of the Scots, and their taking of Newcastle. In the year sixteen hundred and six, two judges of assize went out at a gate in Yorke, where never any judges were knowne to goe out before." More remarkable things than these happen in our times unpredicted by Mother Shipton.

I will back Tiptree farm against Coltonhagge; and as to the way in which the judges went out of York, look at the way in which they now "goe" in—a fly from the railway station conveys all the dignified horse-hair and ermine.

It is not easy to determine whether Mr. Besly, in this place, asked Mother Shipton to favour him with a song; but, if he did not she gave him one of her own accord, breaking out into the following doleful strain:

> "Then Warre shall begin in the spring,
> Much woe to England it shall bring;
> Then shall the ladies cry well-away,
> That ever we liv'd to see this day."

But she soon resumed her customary rhythmical prose:

"Then best for them that have the least, and worst for them that have the most; you shall not know of the warre overnight, yet you shall have it in the morning; and when it comes it shall last three yeares; between Carden (Calder?) and Aire shall be great warfare; when all the world is lost, it shall be called Christ's Croft. When the battell begins, it shall be where Crookback Richard began (ended?) his fray." Chorus interpolates in this place, "Neare Leicester, where Richard the Third was slaine in battell, there Colonel Hastings was one of the first in armes, endeavouring to seise the commission of array in opposition to others that were settling the militia."

But the prophetic fury is on the sibyl, and this is her descant:

"They shall say to warfare for our king for half-a-crowne a-day, but stirre not (they will say) to warfare for your king on pain of hanging, but stirre not; for he that goes to complaine shall not come back againe. The time will come when England shall tremble and quake for feare of a dead man that shall be heard to speak. Then will the dragon give the bull a great snap, and when the one is downe, then they will goe to London towne. Then there will be a great battell between England and Scotland, and they will be pacified for a time, and when they come to Brammamore they fight, and are againe pacified for a time, then there will be a great battell between England and Scotland at Stockmore. Then will a raven sit on the cross and drinke as much bloud of nobles as of the comons, then woe is me, for London shall be destroyed for ever after." Chorus remarks here: "It is to be noted and admired that this cross," (Which cross? It is as indefinite as "this Turk" in Lord Bateman's ballad) "in Shipton's days, was a tall stone cross, which ever since hath, by degrees, been sinking into the ground, and now is sunke so low, that a raven may sit on the top of it, and reach with her bill to the ground." Chorus, however, says nothing about the utter destruction of London. Probably it had not occurred in his time.

I can fancy—still not so vividly as I could wish—the awe-stricken astonishment of Mr. Besly as he listened to what follows:

"There will come a woman with one eye, and she shall tread in many men's blood to the knee; and a man leaning on a staffe by her, say to him 'What art thou?" And he shall say, 'I am the King of Scots,' and she shall say, 'Goe with me to my house, for there are three knights,' and he will goe with her and stay there three dayes and three nights; then will England be lost, and they will cry twice a day 'England is lost!'" (As popular orators continue to cry, though somewhat oftener than twice a day.) "Then there will be three knights in Petergate in Yorke, and (this is terrible) the one shall not know the other; there shall be a child born in Pomfret with three thumbs,"—(allow Chorus to make an observation on this prodigy: "There is a child not many yeares since born at Pomfret with three thumbs!")—"and those three knights shall give him three horses to hold while they winne England" (Chorus does not verify this part of the prediction), "and all noble blood shall be gone but one; and they shall carry him to Sheriff Hutton's castle, six miles from Yorke, and he shall dye ther, and they shall chuse an earle in the field, and hanging their horses on a thorne, will rue the time that ever they were borne—to see so much blood shed." (I picture to myself Mr. Besly bursting into tears at this juncture; but Ursula goes on implacably.) "Then they will come to Yorke to besiege it, and they shall keep them out three days and three nights" (this is surely a civil war between the parts of speech) "and a penny loafe shall be within the bar at half-a-crown, and without the bar at a penny; and they will sweare if they will not yeeld" (who are these turbulent parties?) "to blow up the town walls; then they will let them in, and they will hang up the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen," (Thank heaven, "they" have hold of something substantial at last!) "and they will goe into Crouch church; there will be three knights goe in, and but one come out againe, and he will cause proclamation to be made, that any one may take house, tower, or bower for twelve yeares, and while the world endureth there shall never be warfare againe," (here Mr. Besly wipes his eyes) "nor any more kings or queenes; but the kingdom shall be governed by the lords, and then shall Yorke be London." (Perhaps the editor of Notes and Queries will kindly say whether the familiar expression, "York, you're wanted!" has any relation to these coming events, for at present they have not yet happened.) "And after this shall be a white harvest of corne gotten in by women. Then shall be in the north that one woman shall say unto another, 'Mother, I have seene a man to-day,' and for one man there shall be a thousand women. Then shall be a man sitting on St. James's

Church hill weeping his fill." (Like Besly.)

This is bad enough, but worse remains behind.

"And after that a ship shall come sayling up the Thames till it come against London, and the master of the ship shall weepe, and the marriners shall aske him why he weepeth, seeing he hath made so good a voyage, and he shall say, 'Ah! what a goodly city this was; none in the world comparable to it; and now there is scarce left any house that can let us have drinke for our money!'"

I am sorry to be obliged to say with Desdemona, "Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion!" for this is the last of Ursula's prophecies. Chorus, however, utters a parting howl, after this fashion:

"Unhappy be hae that lives to see those dayse,
But happy are the dead Shipton's wife sayes:
He the world old age this woman did foretell
Strange things shall hap, which in our times have fell."

The bad grammar of Chorus must be forgiven for the sake of his mournful rhyme.

The work from whence the foregoing extracts are taken, is a thin quarto of five or six leaves, and bears the following title: "Mother Shipton's Prophecies; with Three and XX more, all most terrible and wonderfull. Predicting strange alterations to befall this climate of England. Contents: 1 of K. Richard III. 2. Mr. Truswell, Recorder of Lincolne. 3. Lillie's Prediction. 4. A Prophesie alluding to the Scots' last invasion. 5. Ignatius his prophesie. 6. Mrs. White's prophesie. 7. Old Sybilla's prophesie. 8. Merlin's prophesies. 10. Mr. Brightman's. 11. Paulus Grebnerus Pro. 12. A prophesie in old English metre. 13. Another antient proph. 14. An other short but pithy. 15. An other very obscure. 16. Saltmant his predict. 17. A strange prophesie of an old Welsh woman. 18. Bede's prophesie. 19. William Ambrose. 20. Thomas of Astledowne. 22. Saunders his prediction. 23. A prophesie of David, Cardinall of France, &c." (A woodcut, to be described, fills up the rest of the page, and then comes the imprint, as follows: "London, printed by T. P. for F. Coles, and are to be sold at his shop at the signe of the Lambe in the Old Baily, near the Sessions House. 1663.")

The frontispiece represents "The Pope suppressed by H. 8." Henry sits on his throne, with a drawn sword in his right hand, receiving a copy of the Bible from Cranmer, who, like the other personages introduced, is labelled with his name. The monarch's feet are both firmly set on the body of Pope Clement the Seventh, who is struggling on the dais, his triple crown fallen off, and his hands outstretched. Bishop Fisher and Cardinal Pole stand on either side of him; the first stooping, with one hand under the Pope's arm, and the other with a hand on the Pope's body. Cromwell and others are round the throne, and the foreground is filled with despairing monks. But the woodcut on the title-page is the curiosity. Conspicuous in the centre there is a portrait in profile of Mother Shipton herself, in an attitude of prediction, with two fingers of the left hand extended. She wears a black gown and a white head-dress, like a man's nightcap, the point thrown well to the rear and curving upwards. Her dark hair straggles wildly over her face, her nose and chin are portentously hooked, and on her cheek is the sign—a large wart—which it so much gladdened the heart of Mathew Hopkins, the witch-finder, to discover. She holds a stick in her other hand, the top of which represents the head of a bird with a very sinister eye—probably the portrait of a familiar. That there may be no mistaking her for any of the celebrated beauties of the day—Henry's wives amongst them—the word Shipton is written in legible letters over her head. But Ursula is not "alone in her glory." She is the centre of a system, of which the satellites are the Pope's head in a circle, supported by demons in animal forms; Cardinal Wolsey shut up in a castle, with a companion who resembles Charles the First; Henry the Eighth, apparently at the altar with Anne Boleyn and another person; and, more prominent than any except the prophetess herself, the renowned Mr. Saltmarsh, a prophet on his own hook. This gentleman appears, with the exception of a cincture, in the costume of Eden before the fall, and stands under a grand canopy, the curtains of which flow over his feet in ample folds; he bears a flaming torch in one hand, and a sealed book in the other. What Mr. Saltmarsh did to merit posthumous fame may be briefly told. During the period when Lord Fairfax and the generals were at Windsor, Mr. Saltmarsh, being moved by the Spirit, went thither for the purpose of predicting all manner of misfortunes. His omens do not seem to have disturbed the parliamentary leaders, who contented themselves with asking after his health—a very pertinent inquiry; and Mr. Saltmarsh wended his way home again, having taken nothing by his motion but an illness which carried him off a few days afterwards. Fortunately for the world, he died speechless.

So much for the most attractive part of this book, which bears the signature of Mr. I. O. Halliwell, the well-known archæologist, and was acquired by the Museum about four years ago. It is marked as extremely scarce, with an intimation that there is a copy in the Pepysian Collection. The press-mark is 8610. d. I may add that the Museum contains, moreover, a Dutch translation of the Prophecies, without the embellishments, published at Gravenhogen in sixteen hundred and sixty-seven. Besides the preceding, there is also in the National Collection a Life of Mother Shipton, under the title of "Wonders!!! past, present, and to come, being the

strange prophecies and uncommon predictions of the famous Mother Shipton, known by the appellation of the Yorkshire Prophetess. London, 8vo. 1797." This book is, in point of style, a very worthless production, but it indicates one or two points in Mother Shipton's career, not given elsewhere. We learn from it that the prophetess died in fifteen hundred and fifty-one,—not at the stake, like Anne Askew or Joan Boeher, for she was too wise to meddle with doctrinal subjects—but quietly in her bed, her last prediction having reference to the period of her own decease. After her death a monument was erected to her memory on the high north road, about a mile from York, where, to judge by the frontispiece of this Life, she figured in the high steeple-crowned hat and costume with which her personal appearance is usually associated. Her epitaph is said to have run thus:

"Here lies one who never ly'd,
Whose skill often has been try'd;
Her prophesies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive."

After this long exordium, which resembles a puritanical grace introductory to very short commons—like the chaplain's benediction on Sir Dugald Dalgetty's meal at the Castle of Arderroohr,—I proceed to the legend concerning Mother Shipton:—

On a high ridge which separates the southern extremity of Warwickshire from the county of Oxford, and distant about four miles from the picturesque market-town of Chipping Norton, are still to be seen the remains of a very interesting monument, undoubtedly of Druidical origin, although ascribed by local tradition to the agency of Mother Shipton. Archæologists know this monument by the name of Rollrich Stones, but the inhabitants of the adjacent villages of Great and Little Rollewright give the separate parts various designations illustrative of their own belief. The principal feature of these remains is a group of stones forming a ring which is not completely circular, the longest diameter, from north to south, being nearly thirty-six yards, and the shortest not quite thirty-five. Originally they all stood upright, but not more than seven-and-twenty of the number, which is stated to have been sixty-five, remain in that position, the rest lying prone on the earth, half-hidden by the soil and long waving grass. Owing to this circumstance it is very difficult to count them correctly, and the peasants say, with an air of mystery, that it is not possible to do so, no two persons agreeing in the tale, nor the same number being arrived at by a repetition of the experiment. I found this true in my own instance, and the number I reckoned certainly differed considerably from the result of an attempt made by another person. As we had not time to verify our separate statements or correct our own mistakes, the magical difficulty was left unsolved. None of the stones in this circle are more than five feet high, and some of them are barely twelve inches above the ground; but at a distance of about eighty or ninety yards to the eastward, stand five others, of considerable height—the tallest being nearly eleven feet—which, as they lean towards each other, with an opening from the west, are called the Five Whispering Knights. Nor are these all that remain, for, at about the same distance from the circle, to the north-east, and in a field by itself, divided by the road which separates the counties, stands one large stone in solitary majesty, popularly known as the King's Stone. It is upwards of five feet broad and between eight and nine feet high, and from its twisted shape and rough-grained surface (as it may well present, after a buffet with the weather of a couple of thousand years) is the most remarkable of the series. The learned Camden and, after him, Dr. Plot, the author of the Natural History of Oxfordshire, pronounced the monument to be a memorial erected by Rollo the Dane, who won a great victory somewhere about the beginning of the tenth century, but their speculations were set at rest by Dr. Stukeley, who, with greater reason, declared the remains Druidical, the circle having been a temple, the five detached stones a cistvaen or cromlech, and the solitary one a cardinal point. Independently of the form of the larger group, Dr. Stukeley relied upon its etymology, deriving Rollrich, not from Rollo the Dane, but from Rhold-rwyg, the wheel or circle of the Druids; and this, without doubt, is the true interpretation.

Now for the popular opinion of the monument. The stones, according to universal acceptation amongst the peasantry, are neither more nor less than a petrified camp or army. Never look for chronology in these matters, but take the legend as you find it. If you believe that men have once been turned into stone, it is not worth your while to question who performed the feat, or to ask when it happened; so the story runs as follows:

A certain ambitious warrior, being minded to reduce the whole of England beneath his sway, set out one day (from what place is not stated) with a train of five knights and a well-appointed band of sixty fine hardy soldiers, to effect his meditated conquest. Advancing from the south in his progress towards the borders of Warwickshire, where the issue of his adventure, as it had been darkly foretold him, was to be determined, the king halted his little army for the night on the edge of Whichwood Forest, not far from the spot where now stands the little village of Shipton-under-Whichwood. His reason for pausing there is alleged to have been his desire to confer with the wise woman, who dwelt at Shipton at that time, and who afterwards bequeathed her name to

the place. The king's council was composed of the knights already mentioned; but on this occasion, seeking advice from none, he left the camp alone—though not unobserved by the five, who followed at a distance—and proceeded to the dwelling of Mother Shipton. He was seen to enter her hut, but what took place within has been only imperfectly guessed at, none of the knights having courage enough to venture sufficiently near to hear exactly what passed between their leader and the dreaded witch. It is believed, however, that in order to obtain her assistance, the warrior proposed a certain compact; but the conditions which Mother Shipton strove to exact must have been too hard, for high words arose between the two—so much was ascertained by the listeners before they discreetly withdrew—and her harsh voice was heard to threaten the warrior, who came forth in great wrath from the hut, and strode back to his tent. How he spent the remainder of the night is not on record; but, at break of day he was in the saddle, marshalling his men; and, long before the sun had gilded the tops of the forest trees, he led them across Lynham Heath, and skirting Knollberry Banks, left the old Saxon mart of Ceapen-Northtown behind, and plunged into the woody glades that yet interposed between him and the object of his desires. After a toilsome march of five hours, he came to a steep ascent, where the corn grows now, but which then was a desert waste. Laboriously his followers climbed the hill, nor rested until the crest of the ridge was nearly gained. Here they paused, and the five knights stood some distance apart, while their eager leader spurred towards a slight eminence, which, from that point, was all that impeded the view into the broad valley beyond, the haven of his expectations. Suddenly, a female figure appeared on the rising summit of the knoll, and, in the clear morning light, the five knights, who watched the motions of their chief, recognised the unearthly lineaments of Ursula Shipton. The events of the previous night came back to their memories, and they whispered among each other. For an instant, the bold adventurer was lost to their view, but presently he re-appeared; and, as he breasted the last ascent, they heard his voice: "Out of my way, Hag!" he cried—

> "If Long Compton I may see,
> Then king of England I shall be!"

But another voice—the voice of Ursula Shipton—exclaimed:

> "Rise up hill! Stand fast, Stone!
> King of England thou shalt be none!"

She waved her arm as she spoke; the earth swelled; and the ambitious chief, the five whispering knights, and the whole of the warrior's mesnie, were at once transformed to stone!

Six paces further, and the village of Long Compton had been distinctly seen; but, where the king's stone buries its base in the ground nothing is visible but the hill-side.

There is yet another tradition connected with Rollrich Stones.

A certain man of wealth, the lord of the manor of Little Rollewright, Humphrey Boffin by name, resolved to remove the King's Stone to the courtyard of his own dwelling, about a mile distant, at the foot of the hill. The country people dissuaded him from making the attempt, telling him that no good would come of it; but he, being an intemperate, violent man, would not be thwarted of his headstrong will, and commenced the attempt. He thought to accomplish his purpose with a wagon and four horses, but, though the latter were of a famous breed and remarkably strong, they could not stir the stone a single inch. He then yoked other four to the team, but still without success; again and again he made the same addition, nor was it until four-and-twenty horses had been attached to the load, that he was able to effect its removal. At length Humphrey Boffin triumphed, and the King's Stone stood in the centre of his own courtyard. But his triumph was of short-lived duration, for no sooner had the shades of night appeared, than an indescribable tumult appeared to surround his house, waxing louder and fiercer as the night drew on; nothing was heard but groans and shrieks, the clash of weapons, and the direful din of battle, which noises lasted till the morning, when all again was still. Humphrey Boffin was greatly frightened; but, for all that, his heart was not changed, and in spite of omens he swore he would keep the stone. The second night was worse than the first; on the third, the uproar of the two were combined, and then Humphrey Boffin gave in. Adopting his wife's counsel (for she, clever woman, saw at once where the shoe pinched), he agreed to restore the King's Stone to the place where Mother Shipton had commanded it to stand. But, the difficulty was how to accomplish the task. It had taken four-and-twenty horses to drag the stone down hill. How many must there be to carry it up again? A single pair settled the question: they were no sooner in the shafts than they drew the wagon with perfect ease; nor did they stop to breathe nor did they turn a hair on their up-hill journey! The country people, however, were right. The attempt did Humphrey Boffin "no good;" the civil war breaking out shortly afterwards, his homestead was burnt and his house ransacked by Cromwell's troopers, and he himself, endeavouring to escape—without Mrs. Boffin—tumbled into a well and was drowned. The lady, it is added, eventually consoled herself by marrying the captain of the troop, who, when the wars were over, became a thriving farmer and leader of the conventicle at Banbury.

Strangers in search of Rollrich Stones may find them more quickly than I did by directing their steps to a clump of lofty fir-trees, which, grown within the arena of the Druid temple, form a landmark for several miles round.

CHIP.

PEN AND INK PIES.

We profess a respect for literature, but we also love cooks. Well, what is writing an article, but making a pie? You roll out your crust, or general subject, which is a nutritious compound of wheaten flour, butter, milk, and useful knowledge. You prepare your fruit, or meat, or poultry, or special and novel information. You throw in a few bits of preserved quince, or anecdotes, or forcemeat balls, or happy illustrations. You sweeten to your taste with syrup, brown sugar, or amiable philanthropy; or you season with pepper, salt, and smart remarks, dusting the interior of the paté with fine-chopped lemon-peel, aromatic herbs, and all the small fragments of wit you can muster. When you have roughly got the whole together into shape, you polish up; you cut off round the edges superfluous bits of paste and redundant phrases; you divide into paragraphs and mark out into portions to help; you smooth, and scrape out, and decorate with flowers of eloquence or macaroons and moulded buttons of crust; you varnish with white of egg or glibness of style; and, when the whole is finished to your mind, in the shape of a fair copy and the dish of a neatly-trimmed tart, you send your handiwork or your *mindiwork* to the oven or the printing-office.

Then comes the rub and the test; the proof of the pudding and the page is in the eating and the reading. If your composition be badly put together, the oven and the press will only make it worse; little cracks will gape open wide, and small weak places will become yawning holes. But, if your task have been artistically completed with a spontaneous touch of impulsive genius, it will often turn out better than you expected. You will be agreeably surprised at the result of your efforts, and will chuckle to find it read (or eat) so well. No man can judge of his own performances in their crude manuscript or uncooked state. Sometimes, however, bakers, or editors and printers, will spoil all when you don't deserve it. They will stick your pie or paper in a corner that is too fierce or too slow for it; they will keep it too long, till it gets heavy and loses its flavour. What you expected would be light puff paste proves a leathery and indigestible substance. Sometimes they will pull out the plums and tit-bits, for mere mischief's sake, to show they are somebody with a right to have a finger in; but, against that we ought to set their frequent abstraction of tasteless morsels that are as much out of place as chips in porridge. Occasionally they will make sad errata and fractures, which let out all your spirit, juice, sense, veracity, and gravy. The dropping of a letter or a burning hot patty-pan will make a mess of what was perfect when it came into their hands: indeed, the technical term for a confusion of types is the very thing; printers call it "pie." For such misfortunes the only remedy is patience, seeing that both bakers and printers and cooks and periodical writers are but imperfect creatures at the best.

SCHOBRY THE BANDIT.

Of Schobry, the Hungarian captain of banditti, there are told some Robin Hoodish stories. If I repeat one, it is not for any love I bear to bandits. They are thieves at best, and often something worse than thieves. They are not greatly to be admired if they will now and then do that upon impulse which honest men do always upon principle. As for their generosity with other men's possessions, I do not quite see the admirableness of it, and I never did. It is the light going of what has lightly come,—the wrenching of hard earnings from the man who had an honest and wise use for them, and scattering them away, if not in vicious indulgence, yet in idle waste. Schobry has been known to commit a daring robbery, buy jewellery and rings with the larger half of the proceeds, and dissipate the remainder in revelry and indiscriminate donation. Schobry took great pleasure in laughing at his Austrian pursuers, and amused himself with many practical jokes at the expense of the armed force, when it was called out in consequence of some audacious act of his.

The last joke of this kind preluded his end. Disguised as a common grazier, he waited upon an imperial-royal colonel to represent that Schobry had robbed him on a particular road, and that he thought he could point out the brigand's den. At the same time he went to the head of the police, and declared that he knew Schobry's hiding-place, but would consent to indicate it to the civil power only. This assurance was agreeable to the police, inasmuch as a large reward had been offered for Schobry's apprehension. Of the military expedition, led by a major and directed by Schobry's lieutenant, four soldiers took occasion to desert, two were suffocated in a most intricate swamp, and the rest of the party, having lost their guide, returned next day to quarters in but sorry plight. The police did not fare better. They were to be posted in a cavern, twelve miles from the morass chosen for the manœuvres of the military, and in an opposite direction. Into the cave, it was said, Schobry would pass, unarmed and drowsy, at the time of taking his siesta.

Once upon a time this cavern had served as a place of refuge for the Magyars when pressed by the Osmanli, and some sixty years before Schobry was born, it harboured a formidable banditti, who were ultimately surprised by a body of hussars, and the greater part of them executed by that modification of Lynch-law which the Magyar oppressors call Standrecht. Of course the cave is haunted by the ghosts of these men, and by worse spirits yet. No peasant valuing his safety would pass near it at night, and, moreover, it lies out of the track of habitations. When, now and then, a neighbouring magnate brought a party to the cave, twenty peasants were sent forward with torches to light up its galleries, and place a small portable bridge with iron rails over a chasm on the floor of it, which, although only nine feet wide, was said to be ninety feet in depth.

The party of police, then (thirty-four persons in all), was conveyed to the village near the rocky ridge in the rapidly-driven light-carts of the country. As, in this case, each cart carried not two country people, but six armed policemen, and they went by night, they were four hours in reaching the appointed spot. Many of the policemen were old sergeants and corporals, and one among them (while loading his rusty carbine) declared that he had seen Schobry once, and, however he might be disguised, could not forget him. Schobry smiled encouragingly, and said he was sure his memory would very soon be tested. "How deplorable it is," he added, "that such a fellow should not only make fun habitually out of his pursuers, but that his tricks should so often be the means of taking estimable members of society, like the police, out of their proper homes and beds on cold and rainy nights."

But the police did not complain of this, for they had agreed amongst each other that there must needs be gold and other spoils of the banditti in the cave that Schobry watched so carefully himself of nights. There, however, was among the party a little weazen-faced old corporal, who eyed Schobry with something of mistrust, although his sense of due subordination had restrained him from all hinting of suspicion to the commissary. When the party were within a quarter of a mile of the cave, Schobry himself proposed that he and four men should go forward and see that the coast was clear. The small corporal instantly volunteered for this light infantry duty. When within the cave, Schobry turned round, and noticed that the corporal's carbine was not only at full-cock, but also directed towards him from the priming position. He affected not to notice this, and coolly went on with his exploration. They lighted two torches, found the little bridge in the upright position in which it was usually left when not wanted, and, as it fitted into grooves on either side the chasm, the steady way across was soon secured. The five returned, and reported all safe; the main body advanced; the cave was occupied. More torches were then lighted, and the bridge was crossed. The little corporal still kept near Schobry, scowling upon him expressively.

The special-commissary, who was leader of the capturing detachment, had under him two of the best spies of the Vienna police, and entertained a firm belief that he was acting upon certain information, while he supposed that the military detachment of whose march he had been secretly informed, was on a wild-goose chace. His main delusion, however, was, that Schobry, who had borrowed a good passport, was no victim, as he called himself, but a past member of the band, who had some reason for desiring to be revenged upon its chief. Schobry gave a square-bottle of spirits to his next neighbour, the corporal, signed him to drink from it, and pass it round. Then addressing himself to the head functionary, said, "Gracious Lord-Commissary, it is now scarcely six o'clock, and we will lie in wait; for he never comes to his lair, in that corner, until past eleven. I will take you to a flanking gallery of the cavern, where the torches can neither be seen nor smelt; your worthy suite can then rest and take some refreshment, until the sentinels you have so wisely posted near the entrance give the signal to us. The commissary, evidently disturbed at the information that the cave had so many ramifications, gave the order to explore the passage indicated. Again the little corporal went as a volunteer upon the service, for he was really brave, and restlessly suspicious. The others began to prepare themselves for ease and repose, when the advanced guard returned with the announcement of a remarkable discovery. Schobry, and certainly not less than thirty of his followers, must have been disturbed while feasting there upon the previous day, because a table had been discovered spread with all kinds of good meat and wine. Instant was the rush of men eager to verify this statement. Subordination put quite of question, the commanding commissary only ordered his band to be seated, and to make the best use of the knives and forks they found. To save appearances, and preserve due respect for his own dignity, he took the head of the table and began to carve. After an hour's time Schobry and his adherent the corporal were almost the only sober people of the party. Then said the bandit to his double, in a confidential tone, "This really is going too far; there is nothing but wine and spirits on the table—no water to mix with it. I will take these two jugs—you can carry the two others; we had better fill them at the tank close by. Now it was evidently the corporal's plan to do anything together with the guide he was mistrusting, but not to allow that gentleman to pass out of his sight. Schobry accordingly led the way, filled the

four pitchers, and signed his companion to take up his share. The latter stooping low, obeyed, and at the instant turned a summerset across them. Before he was well on his feet again, Schobry, who had helped him across the pitchers with a sudden kick, had crossed the chasm, and drawn after him the bridge. The shouts of the betrayed re-echoed through the winding vaults, and, before Schobry reached the cavern's mouth, a ball from the corporal's carbine whizzed near his head. As to the outside sentinels, they had been gagged, pinioned, and carried off by the banditti long before.

The next thing to be done was to prevent the carts from travelling back to their starting-point, and giving an alarm. Schobry, therefore, walked back to them, and was met by the two police-officers in charge of the waggon-train and several of the drivers, who eagerly inquired what the report of fire-arms signified? The answer was: "The object for which I brought the party here has been attained; we are now going across country to Nagy-Sölöpschek with our prisoners. The special-commissary and I have therefore resolved that you should go there by the road, and wait in the town for us. You are afterwards to give your horses plenty of corn and twenty-four hours' rest. There will also be allowed to each man one florin a day beyond the pay agreed for." As Schobry had been seen by all these men to direct everything concerning the expedition, no doubt was raised as to his authority, and there was the less murmur in yielding to it, because he confirmed it by giving to the elder policeman a small bag of zwanzigers on account of subsistence-money. Now, the town of Nagy-Sölöpschek was fully nine German miles off, and it was plain that no alarm could be raised at head-quarters for the next four days, during which time the special-commissary and his retinue would have an ample opportunity of sleeping off their wine, and laying in their rheumatism. Whether they would have any food left, or any torch-light by which to seek for the fatal tank, were considerations that did not trouble the planner of this vagabond's revenge. It was not, however, his purpose that the imperial and royal functionaries and their troop should die of hunger or despair; so he wrote, on the third day, by a village-post, to say that the whole party had joined Schobry's band, and was inhabiting the famous cave. The consternation of authorities may be conceived. Three companies of regular-infantry were sent to capture the police, and in that manner they were rescued. This jest proved serious in its results. Estafettes galloped in all directions; such vigorous measures were adopted both in villages and towns, danger grew imminent. Under the urgent necessity of removing as far as possible from the scene of his exploits, Schobry went to Sirmia, in a close carriage, accompanied by two of his most faithful followers, attired as servants. He is said to have buried, on this occasion, a sum of six thousand four hundred ducats, and jewellery of great value, somewhere near Voukovar. His first notion was, to cross the Saava, and take refuge in Servia until he could escape to a seaport, for he was convinced that his old trade was broken up.

The vigilance of quarantine establishments, and of the military police on the frontier, were, however, greatly to be dreaded, and he had also a strong disinclination to renounce his country.

While he was revolving such considerations in his mind, hundreds of functionaries were at work spinning out schemes for his destruction; and the most inveterate of these was the special-commissary whom he had exposed to ridicule. Yet this official had not been greatly to blame. It was to the vanity of a superior authority that the discomfiture was due. That officer had received an anonymous letter (the preparatory portion of the hoax) to say that, within a certain time, a party irritated against Schobry would offer the local authorities of a place named to deliver the redoubtable bandit into their hands; and he hastened to tell this beforehand, and as reliable information, lest the provincial subordinate should subsequently take credit for original action in the case. Schobry knew very well that the Austrians like a sneak, and would put more faith in a little underhand meanness of tale-bearing than in any information offered to them in more manly form.

It seemed that the small corporal really had ventured to hint his suspicions; but the commissary checked the expression of them by saying, "I know who and what he is, quite well." The corporal was, of course, no way behind the commissary in zeal for revenge.

Now in a small garrison town of the Austrian military frontier, there was an imperial-royal lieutenant of infantry between twenty and five-and-twenty years old, with a monthly stipend of twenty-six florins (paid in bank or state-paper, which is usually at a heavy discount), less certain deductions. There was the daughter of a small employé, endowed only with good looks, household knowledge, and an inordinate love of dress and ornaments. Let her be called Julia Petravits, daughter of the worthy post-officer at Semlin, who himself enjoyed a salary of eight hundred florins a-year for the discharge of his troublesome duties, and for the support of his mother, wife, and seven children. Two such persons are liable to suffer disappointment in the means of marrying, and upon this head it is needful to explain a certain Austrian military regulation. No Austrian lieutenant in the regular army can receive the imperial permission to marry, unless he, his betrothed, or others on their behalf, can deposit a sum equal to about six

hundred pounds sterling. The interest of this capital is paid to the spouses, and it ultimately forms a fund for the widow's pension in case of the husband's death. Captains and field-officers must furnish proportionately larger sums, if they are not too old to wish for this manner of settlement in life. Now, unhappily, neither Lieutenant Wärmerstein nor Julia Petravits had the remotest chance, in the ordinary course of provision or inheritance, of ever being able to compass a twentieth part of the required sum. They had danced together at the Golden Angel, and were irretrievably in love.

A relative, who had carried on a lucrative business as an apothecary at Gallatz, was applied to, and would willingly have responded favourably to the appeal; but he had married a poor Greek girl, thirty-five years younger than himself, and she was threatening to divorce him, and to have his property sequestered, if he gave more than twenty-five ducats towards Julia's happiness. Poor Julia cried for six hours after receiving with the money this qualified refusal; after which she went out and spent more than half the ducats upon various coquettish articles of dress, as if bent upon driving Wärmerstein totally mad with admiration. The remainder would have been dissipated in the same way next morning, but that a bright (and as she fancied original) thought struck her during the sleepless night which intervened. By putting two florins each time on three numbers in the Lotto, which was, providentially, drawn at Temeswar every ten days, a terno would be formed, entitling the holder to nine thousand six hundred florins. She took the number according with her own age, fifteen; the age of her infantry adorer, twenty-four; and their united ages, thirty-nine. Could there be a prettier terno secco than numbers fifteen, twenty-four, thirty-nine? Fortune must be the most unfeeling jade in existence, if she failed to favour so sweet a combination. Nothing was more simple than the appropriation of the gains—florins six thousand; for the caution-money would be forwarded to Vienna, by the paternal post, without an instant's delay; and then there would remain, from the produce of the terno secco, upwards of three thousand florins towards the expenses of a first establishment, after having allowed for a present to her parents equal to their yearly income.

The first drawing was an actual scandal, if not an individual insult. The little strip of paper from the collector announced one, seven, fifty-nine, sixty-eight, eighty-eight, as the five numbers drawn from the wheel, containing little scrolls marked from one to ninety inclusive.

"What!" exclaimed Julia, "these numbers are actually absurd! They represent nothing but infancy and old age."

In the next drawing, her own age and the united ages were indeed drawn, but not the lover's age; so nothing was got by that, except a sort of prospect promise of improvement. At length the sacred fund, as well as a pair of earrings, had been devoted to the goddess Fortune of Temeswar. As a climax of evil destiny, the regiment was ordered off, and bound to march within a week or two. Wärmerstein became a slave to platoon preparations.

Upon the morning of a magnificent tropical day in August, the disconsolate Julia strolled, with her younger sister, to those celebrated heights from whence Belgrade had been bombarded. Little Katinka collected wild flowers, and pensive Julia sat on the soft moss, gazing unconsciously upon the Danube and the minarets of the Turkish city, when she suddenly discovered that the dark eyes of a stranger were upon her tearful face. He was handsomely dressed, and the fingers of his ungloved hand were covered with rings, according to the Hungarian fashion of all times. He raised his foraging-cap from his head, and respectfully addressed some inquiries as to the topography, in a German so accentuated and cadenced that there could be no doubt as to the Magyar origin of the speaker. In her innocence of worldly conventionalities, and in courtesy to a stranger, Julia answered all his questions with the grace and intelligence that belonged to her. Besides, he appeared to her quite an old man, and she was not alone with him, for she had beckoned Katinka to her side. The manner of the stranger seemed to be so sympathising, that she ended by recounting every portion of her simple history. The stranger's interest was manifested by a promise that if Julia would meet him in the same place, on the following day, he would be able to give her good advice, only she must say nothing to her parents. At the appointed hour the parties met with increased interest, and spoke as confidentially as if they had known each other for years. At length the Hungarian said, "Dear child! your hope of happiness shall not be lost for the matter of a few thousand florins. I will supply them, but have not the money here. By all that is solemn" (he signed himself with the cross), "if you come to this spot at nine o'clock on the morning of the twelfth of next month, I will put the bank-notes into your hand, asking nothing of you in return but a parting kiss, and a promise that you will not any longer think ill of Schobry, because I am Schobry."

Julia was at home more silent than ever She told the lieutenant that she had a hope still; and he concluded it to be something as promising as the possible terno; so he smoked his pipe, and trusted that the quarters he was moving to might bring him more substantial luck.

Having examined the banks of the Danube and of the Saava, in case of flight becoming unavoidable, Schobry proceeded, unsuspected, in his handsome equipage to Stuhlweissenberg, where he had appointed to meet one of his agents, who had extensive means of knowing what was going on in the camp of hostile police and military cohorts. The accounts were anything but reassuring: the whole country was raised; minute descriptions of his person circulated everywhere; and particular instructions had been sent to the commandants along the military frontier; consequently, Voukovar, Peterwardein, Mitrovitze, and Semlin, were the most dangerous places to which he could go. It was proposed that he should remain quiet in the Transylvanian mountains. His recent visit to Voukovar had by some means become known to the authorities a few hours after he quitted; and if he had not, by mere accident, taken a cross-country track, he would have been intercepted. Yet, after learning all this and more, his confidant was dismayed at hearing him say, in his firmest and most deliberate tone, "I shall be obliged to go to Voukovar and Essig, and I shall be obliged to go to Semlin, or close to it." A good disguise, and a new passport adapted to the travesty, enabled him to do as he pleased at Voukovar, where the police were off their guard, little expecting a fresh visit so soon after a hot pursuit. But on the frontier all the public guardians were on the alert, and they have often penetrated masqueradings that passed undiscovered even in Vienna. It is said that Schobry went from Voukovar to some part of the Baïtchka county, or to the Banat, on his way to Semlin, quite alone. In the small hostelries on the road he often heard himself spoken of, and quite as often spoke of himself. One evening he arrived (after losing his way to a farm-house, where he had a friend), wet and weary, at a village inn, and went to bed at once; merely lighting a candle, drinking a tumbler of wine in the common room, and ordering his supper to be brought to him a couple of hours later. But that lighting of a candle was the extinguishing of his own life. The little corporal, his restless foe since the adventure of the cave, was there among the smokers, and instantly set off to tell the commander of troops in the village who the new guest was at the village inn. The captain, a cautious old Kaiserlich, made full inquiry before he decided upon his course. It was known that Schobry always went well armed; and the point of skill was, therefore, to take him alive, without giving him a chance of killing one of his assailants.

The innkeeper (a docile Saxon, whose discretion could be trusted), as well as the battalion-surgeon, were called to the captain's quarters. There it was arranged that a bottle of a superior kind of red wine should be drugged, and supplied, at half-past seven o'clock, to Schobry with his supper; afterwards twenty men, under a lieutenant, were to rush into the room with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets; these were to bind Schobry as he slept under the influence of the narcotic. The corporal volunteered to enter first, bearing a torch.

As he sat down to supper, Schobry observed to the innkeeper's wife (who waited on him, knowing nothing of his quality, and his impending fate) that he never before felt such gloomy forebodings, and requested her to be extremely careful that night against fire, as there was so much wood in the building of the house, and he had noticed that the room next his was full of flax. The woman replied that she herself was very nervous about fire, and always walked through the house with a lantern before going to rest for the night. He drank about half the wine, and must have taken with it a sufficient over-dose of opium. Before the supper was removed, he reverted to the subject of fire, observing, that if such a misfortune were to occur, he could save, at any rate, himself, the windows of the room being only a couple of feet from the ground. He little knew that he was already watched through those windows by the eight eyes of four sentinels and the two eyes of the small corporal, who helped to watch until the bandit was in bed, and had put out the candle.

All was ready at midnight for the capture. The door had been gently opened, and the victim's hard breathing was heard. The corporal entered with his torch, and Schobry either started up, or uttered a cry in his sleep. Contrary to their original orders, four soldiers fired at him from the doorway, and three of their balls told. According to some accounts, Schobry was killed on the instant, and his dead body exposed next day to the terror of ill-doers; while another version is that, being only wounded, he was executed publicly after a brief trial.

Under the pillow of the bed in which he slept, a square packet was found, and upon the blood-stained cover there was something written. The contents were six Vienna bank-notes (at one of those rare periods when these were at par) for one thousand florins each, and twenty notes of one hundred florins. It is not known who received that treasure; but it certainly did not reach Julia Petravits. So the lovers did not marry, and were miserable ever after.

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"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

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MY BLACK MIRROR.

HAS everybody heard of Doctor Dee, the magician, and of the black speculum or mirror of cannel coal, in which he could see at will everything in the wide world, and a good many things beyond it? If so, I may introduce myself to my readers in the easiest manner possible. I am a descendant of Doctor Dee, and I profess the occult art to the extent of keeping a black mirror, made exactly after the model of that possessed by my astrological ancestor. My speculum, like his, is constructed of an oval piece of cannel coal, highly polished, and set on a wooden back with a handle to hold it by. Nothing can be simpler than its appearance; nothing more marvellous than its capacities—provided always that the person using it be a true adept. Any man who disbelieves nothing is a true adept. Let him get a piece of cannel coal, polish it highly, clean it before use with a white cambric handkerchief, retire to a private sitting-room, invoke the name of Doctor Dee, shut both eyes for a moment, and open them again suddenly on the black mirror. If he does not see anything he likes, after that, past, present, or future, then let him depend on it there is some speck or flaw of incredulity in his nature, and he is consequently not a true adept. The marvellous morsel of coal will never be more to him than the primrose was to Peter Bell; and the sad termination of his career may be considered certain—sooner or later, he will end in being nothing but a rational man.

I, who have not one morsel of rationality about me; I, who am as true an adept as if I had lived in the good old times ("the Ages of Faith," as another adept has very properly called them) find unceasing interest and occupation in my black mirror. For everything I want to know, and for everything I want to do, I consult it. The other day, for instance, desiring to ascertain whether I should ever be married, I went through the requisite formula, and looked on the cannel coal. A tall and dignified woman advanced towards me. Her bonnet was big enough to cover her head; her ankles were occasionally visible; and she appeared in a gown of moderate size instead of a balloon inflated by crinoline. I knew from this that I was to be married some day, but certainly not just yet. When the present fashion changes, I shall go out with a nosegay in my button-hole and meet the lady of the black mirror. I shall bow, smile, and say, "Madam, I adore you." She will curtsey, sigh, and say, "In that case, sir, you had better take my hand." And we shall be married, and fondly cherish each other for the rest of our lives. I know all that only from looking at the cannel coal. Who would not be a true adept?

What is my present situation, and how do I make my black mirror applicable to it? I am at present in the position of most of the other inhabitants of London; I am thinking of soon going out of town. My time for being away is so limited, and my wanderings have extended, at home and abroad, in so many directions, that I cannot hope, this time, to visit any really beautiful scenes, or gather any really interesting experiences that are absolutely new to me. I could only get to positive novelties, by passing all the boundaries of my former expeditions; and this, as I have said, I have not leisure enough to accomplish. Consequently, I must go to some place that I have visited before; and I must, in common regard to my own holiday interests, take good care that it is a place where I have already thoroughly enjoyed myself, without a single drawback to my pleasure that is worth mentioning. Under these circumstances, if I were a mere rational man, what should I do? Weary my memory to help me to decide on a destination, by giving me my past travelling recollections in one long panorama, although I can tell by experience that of all my faculties memory is the least ready to act at my will, the least serviceable at the very time when I most want to employ it. As a true adept, I know better than to give myself any useless trouble of this sort. I retire to my private sitting-room, take up my black mirror, mention what I want—and, behold! on the surface of the cannel coal the image of my former travels passes before me, in a succession of dream-scenes. I revive my past experiences, and I make my present choice out of them by the evidence of my own eyes; and I may add, by that of my own ears also—for the figures in my magic landscapes move and speak!

Shall I go on the continent again? Yes. To what part of it? Suppose I revisit Austrian Italy, for the sake of renewing my familiarity with certain views, buildings, and pictures which once delighted me? But let me first ascertain whether I had any serious drawbacks to complain of on making acquaintance with that part of the world. Black mirror! show me my first evening in Austrian Italy.

A cloud rises on the magic surface—rests on it a little while—slowly disappears. My eyes are fixed on the cannel coal. I see nothing, hear nothing of the world about me. The first of the magic scenes grows visible. I behold it, as in a dream. Away with the ignorant Present. I am in Italy again.

The darkness is just coming on. I see myself looking out of the side window of a carriage. The hollow roll of the wheels has changed to a sharp rattle, and we have entered a town. We cross a vast square, illuminated by two lamps and a glimmer of reflected light from a coffee-shop window. We get on into a long street, with heavy stone arcades for foot-passengers to walk under. Everything looks dark and confused; grim visions of cloaked men flit by, all smoking; shrill female voices rise above the clatter of our wheels, then subside again in a moment. We stop. The bells on the horses' necks ring their last tiny peal for the night. A greasy hand opens the carriage-door, and helps me down the steps. I am under an archway, with blank darkness before me, with a smiling man holding a flaming tallow candle by my side, with street spectators silently looking on behind me. They wear high-crowned hats and brown cloaks, mysteriously muffling them up to the chin. Brigands, evidently. Pass, Scene! I am a peaceable man, and I don't like the suspicion of a stiletto, even in a dream.

Show me my sitting-room. Where did I dine, and how, on my first evening in Austrian Italy?

I am in the presence of two cheerful slovenly waiters, with two flaring candles. One is lighting lamps; the other is setting brushwood and logs in a blaze in a perfect cavern of a hearth. Where am I, now that there is plenty of light to see by? Apparently in a banqueting-hall, fifty feet long by forty wide. This is my private sitting-room, and I am to eat my little bit of dinner in it all alone. Let me look about observantly, while the meal is preparing. Above me is an arched painted ceiling, all alive with Cupids rolling about on clouds, and scattering perpetual roses on the heads of travellers beneath. Around me are classical landscapes of the school which treats the spectator to umbrella-shaped trees, calm green oceans, and foregrounds rampant with dancing goddesses. Beneath me is something amazingly elastic to tread upon, smelling very like old straw, which indeed it is, covered with a thin drugget. This is humanely intended to protect me against the cold of the stone or brick floor, and is a concession to English prejudices on the subject of comfort. May I be grateful for it, and take no fidgety notice of the fleas, though they are crawling up my legs from the straw and the drugget already.

What do I see next? Dinner on the table. Drab-coloured soup, which will take a great deal of thickening with grated Parmesan cheese, and five dishes all around it. Trout fried in oil, rolled beef steeped in succulent brown gravy, roast chicken with water-cresses, square pastry cakes with mince-meat inside them, fried potatoes—all excellent. This is really good Italian cookery: it is more fanciful than the English and more solid than the French. It is neither greasy nor garlicky, and none of the fried dishes taste in the slightest degree of lamp oil. The wine is good, too—effervescent, tasting of the muscatel grape, and only eighteen-pence a bottle. The second course more than sustains the character of the first. Small browned birds that look like larks, their plump breasts clothed succulently with a counterpane of fat bacon, their tender backs reposing on beds of savoury toast,—stewed pigeon,—a sponge-cake pudding,—baked pears. Where could one find a better dinner or a pleasanter waiter to serve at table? He is neither servile nor familiar, and is always ready to occupy any superfluous attention I have to spare with all the small talk that is in him. He has, in fact, but one fault, and that consists in his very vexatious and unaccountable manner of varying the language in which he communicates with me. I speak French and Italian, and he can speak French also as well as his own tongue. I naturally, however, choose Italian on first addressing him, because it is his native language. He understands what I say to him perfectly, but he answers me in French. I bethink myself, upon this, that he may be wishing, like the rest of us, to show off any little morsel of learning that he has picked up, or that he may fancy I understand French better than I do Italian, and may be politely anxious to make our colloquy as easy as possible to me. Accordingly I humour him, and change to French when I next speak. No sooner are the words out of my mouth than, with inexplicable perversity, he answers me in Italian! All through the dinner I try hard to make him talk the same language that I do, yet, excepting now and then a few insignificant phrases, I never succeed. What is the meaning of his playing this game of philological see-saw with me? Do the people here actually carry the national politeness so far as to flatter the stranger by according him an undisturbed monopoly of the language in which he chooses to talk to them? I cannot explain it, and dessert surprises me in the midst of my perplexities. Four dishes again! Parmesan cheese, macaroons, pears, and green figs. With these

and another bottle of the effervescent wine, how brightly the evening will pass away by the blazing wood fire. Surely, I cannot do better than go to Austrian Italy again, after having met with such a first welcome to the country as this. Shall I put down the cannel coal, and decide without any more ado on paying a second visit to the land that is cheered by my comfortable inn? No, not too hastily. Let me try the effect first of one or two more scenes from my past travelling experience in this particular division of the Italian peninsula. Black Mirror! how did I end my evening at the comfortable inn?

The cloud passes again, heavily and thickly this time, over the surface of the mirror—clears away slowly—shows me myself dozing luxuriously by the red embers with an empty bottle at my side. A suddenly-opening door wakes me up; the landlord of the inn approaches, places a long, official-looking book on the table, and hands me pen and ink. I enquire peevishly what I am wanted to write at that time of night, when I am just digesting my dinner. The landlord answers respectfully that I am required to give the police a full, true, and particular account of myself. I approach the table, thinking this demand rather absurd, for my passport is already in the hands of the authorities. However, as I am in a despotic country, I keep my thoughts to myself, open a blank page in the official-looking book, see that it is divided into columns, with printed headings, and find that I no more understand what they mean than I understand an assessed tax paper at home, to which, by-the-by, the blank page bears a striking general resemblance. The headings are technical official words, which I now meet with as parts of Italian speech for the first time. I am obliged to appeal to the polite landlord, and, by his assistance, I get gradually to understand what it is the Austrian police want of me.

The police require to know, before they will let me go on peaceably to-morrow, first, What my name is in full? (My name in full is Matthew O'Donoghue M'Phinn Phipson Dee; and let the Austrian authorities read it if they can, now they have got it.) Second, What is my nation? (British, and glad to cast it in the teeth of continental tyrants.) Third, Where was I born? (At Merthyr Tydvil. I should be glad to hear the Austrian authorities pronounce that, when they have given up my name in despair.) Fourth, Where do I live? (In London, and I wish I was there now, for I would write to the Times about this nuisance before I slept.) Fifth, How old am I? (My age is what it has been for the last seven years, and what it will remain till I have married the lady whom I saw in my Magic Glass—twenty-five exactly. Married did I say? By all that is inquisitive! here are the police wanting to know (Sixth) whether I am married or single? Landlord, what is the Italian for Bachelor? "Write Nubile, Signor." Nubile? That means Marriageable. There is an epithet to designate a bachelor, which is sure to meet with the approval of the ladies, at least. What next? (O distrustful despots! what next?) Seventh, What is my condition? (First-rate condition, to be sure,—full of rolled beef, toasted larks, and effervescent wine. Condition! What do they mean by that? Profession, is it? I have not got one. What shall I write? "Write Proprietor, signore." Very well; but I don't know that I am proprietor of anything except the clothes I stand up in: even my trunk was borrowed of a friend.) Eighth, Where do I come from? Ninth, Where am I going to? Tenth, When did I get my passport? Eleventh, Where did I get my passport? Twelfth, Who gave me my passport? Was there ever such a monstrous string of questions to address to a harmless idle man, who only wants to potter about Italy quietly in a postchaise! Here, landlord, take the Travellers' Book back to the police. I can write no better answers to their questions. Take it away; and may the Emperor of Austria feel all the safer on his throne, now he knows that I was born at Merthyr Tydvil, and that I have not yet been so fortunate as to get any lady to marry me! Surely, surely, such unfounded and injurious distrust of my character as the production of this book at my dinner-table implies, and such perpetual looking after me as it prognosticates for the future, while I remain in this country, form two serious drawbacks to the pleasure of travelling in Austrian Italy. Shall I give up at once all idea of going there again? No; let me be deliberate in arriving at a decision,—let me patiently try the experiment of looking at one more scene from the past. Black Mirror! how did I travel in Austrian Italy after I had paid my bill in the morning, and had left my comfortable inn?

The new dream-scene shows me evening again. I have joined another English traveller in taking a vehicle that they call a calèche. It is an unspeakably old and frowsy kind of sedan-chair on wheels, with greasy leather curtains and cushions. In the days of its prosperity and youth it might have been a state-coach, and might have carried Sir Robert Walpole to court, or the Abbé Dubois to a supper with the Regent Orleans. It is driven by a tall, cadaverous, ruffianly postilion, with his clothes all in rags, and without a spark of mercy for his miserable horses. It smells badly, looks badly, goes badly; and jerks, and cracks, and totters as if it would break down altogether, when it is suddenly stopped on a rough stone pavement in front of a lonely post-house, just as the sun is sinking and the night is setting in.

The postmaster comes out to superintend

the harnessing of fresh horses. He is tipsy, familiar, and confidential; he first apostrophises the calèche with contemptuous curses, then takes me mysteriously aside, and declares that the whole high road onward to our morning's destination swarms with thieves. It seems, then, that the Austrian police reserve all their vigilance for innocent travellers, and leave local rogues entirely unmolested. I make this reflection, and ask the postmaster what he recommends us to do for the protection of our portmanteaus which are tied on to the roof of the calèche. He answers that unless we take special precautions, the thieves will get up behind, on our crazy foot-board, and will cut the trunks off the top of our frowsy travelling-carriage, under cover of the night, while we are quietly seated inside, seeing and suspecting nothing. We instantly express our readiness to take any precautions that anyone may be kind enough to suggest. The postmaster winks, lays his finger archly on the side of his nose, and gives an unintelligible order in the patois of the district. Before I have time to ask what he is going to do, every idler about the posthouse who can climb, scales the summit of the calèche, and every idler who cannot, stands roaring and gesticulating below with a lighted candle in his hand. While the hubbub is at its loudest, a rival travelling-carriage suddenly drives into the midst of us, in the shape of a huge barrel-organ on wheels, and bursts out awfully in the darkness with the grand march in Semiramide, played with the utmost fury of the drum, cymbal, and trumpet-stops. The noise is so bewildering that my travelling companion and I take refuge inside our carriage, and shut our eyes, and stop our ears, and abandon ourselves to despair. After a time, our elbows are jogged, and a string a-piece is given to us through each window. We are informed in shouts, accompanied in the most inspiriting manner by the grand march, that the strings are fastened to our portmanteaus above; that we are to keep the loose ends round our forefingers all night; and that the moment we feel a tug, we may be quite certain the thieves are at work, and may feel justified in stopping the carriage and fighting for our baggage without any more ado. Under these agreeable auspices, we start again, with our strings round our forefingers. We feel like men about to ring the bell, or like men engaged in deep sea-fishing, or like men on the point of pulling the string of a shower-bath. Fifty times at least, during the next stage, each of us is certain that he feels a tug, and pops his head agitatedly out of window, and sees absolutely nothing, and falls back again exhausted with excitement in a corner of the calèche. All through the night this wear and tear of our nerves goes on; and all through the night (thanks, probably, to the ceaseless popping of our heads out of the windows) not the ghost of a thief comes near us. We begin, at last, almost to feel that it would be a relief to be robbed—almost to doubt the policy of resisting any mercifully-larcenous hands stretched forth to rescue us from the incubus of our own baggage. The morning dawn finds us languid and haggard with the accursed portmanteau-strings dangling unregarded in the bottom of the calèche. And this is taking our pleasure! This is an incident of travel in Austrian Italy! Faithful Black Mirror, accept my thanks. The warning of the two last dream-scenes that you have shown me shall not be disregarded. Whatever other direction I may take when I go out of town for the present season, one road at least I know that I shall avoid—the road that leads to Austrian Italy.

Shall I keep on the northern side of the Alps, and travel a little, let us say, in German-Switzerland? Black Mirror! how did I get on when I was last in that country? Did I like my introductory experience at my first inn?

The vision changes, and takes me again to the outside of a house of public entertainment; a great white, clean, smooth-fronted, opulent-looking hotel—a very different building from my dingy, cavernous Italian inn. At the street-door stands the landlord. He is a little, lean, rosy man, dressed all in black, and looking like a master undertaker. I observe that he neither steps forward nor smiles when I get out of the carriage and ask for a bedroom. He gives me the shortest possible answer, growls guttural instructions to a waiter, then looks out into the street again, and, before I have so much as turned my back on him, forgets my existence immediately. The vision changes again, and takes me inside the hotel. I am following a waiter up-stairs—the man looks unaffectedly sorry to see me. In the bedroom corridor we find a chambermaid asleep with her head on a table. She is woke up; opens a door with a groan, and scowls at me reproachfully when I say that the room will do. I descend to dinner. Two waiters attend on me, under protest, and look as if they were on the point of giving warning every time I require them to change my plate. At the second course the landlord comes in, and stands and stares at me intently and silently with his hands in his pockets. This may be his way of seeing that my dinner is well served; but it looks much more like his way of seeing that I do not abstract any spoons from his table. I become irritated by the boorish staring and frowning of everybody about me, and express myself strongly on the subject of my reception at the hotel to an English traveller dining near me. He is one of those exasperating men who are always ready to put up with injuries, and he coolly accounts for the behaviour of which I complain, by telling me that it is the result of the blunt honesty of the natives, who cannot pretend to take an

interest in me which they do not really feel. What do I care about the feelings of the stolid landlord and the sulky waiters? I require the comforting outward show from them—the inward substance is not of the smallest consequence to me. When I travel in civilised countries, I want such a reception at my inn as shall genially amuse and gently tickle all the region round about my organ of self-esteem. Blunt honesty which is too offensively truthful to pretend to be glad to see me, shows no corresponding integrity—as my own experience informs me at this very hotel—about the capacities of its wine bottles, but gives me a pint and charges me for a quart, in the bill, like the rest of the world. Blunt honesty, although it is too brutally sincere to look civilly distressed and sympathetic when I say that I am tired after my journey, does not hesitate to warm up, and present before me as newly-dressed, a Methuselah of a duck that has been cooked several times over, several days ago, and paid for, though not eaten, by my travelling predecessors. Blunt honesty fleeces me according to every established predatory law of the landlord's code, yet shrinks from the amiable duplicity of fawning affectionately before me all the way up stairs when I first present myself to be swindled. Away with such detestable sincerity as this! Away with the honesty which brutalises a landlord's manners without reforming his bottles or his bills! Away with my German-Swiss hotel, and the extortionate cynic who keeps it! Let others pay tribute if they will to that boor in innkeeper's clothing, the colour of my money he shall never see again.

Suppose I avoid German-Switzerland, and try Switzerland Proper? Mirror! how did I travel when I last found myself on the Swiss side of the Alps?

The new vision removes me even from the most distant view of an hotel of any kind, and places me in a wild mountain country where the end of a rough road is lost in the dry bed of a torrent. I am seated in a queer little box on wheels, called a Char, drawn by a mule and a mare, and driven by a jovial coachman in a blue blouse. I have hardly time to look down alarmedly at the dry bed of the torrent, before the Char plunges into it. Rapidly and recklessly we thump along over rocks and stones, acclivities and declivities that would shake down the stoutest English travelling-carriage, knock up the best-bred English horses, nonplus the most knowing English coachman. Jovial Blue Blouse, singing like a nightingale, drives a-head regardless of every obstacle—the mule and mare tear along madly as if the journey was the great enjoyment of the day to them—the Char cracks, rends, sways, bumps, and totters, but scorns, as becomes a hardy little mountain vehicle, to overturn or come to pieces. When we are not among the rocks we are rolling and heaving in sloughs of black mud and sand, like a Dutch herring-boat in a ground-swell. It is all one to Blue Blouse and the mule and mare. They are just as ready to drag through sloughs as to jolt over rocks; and when we do come occasionally to a bit of unencumbered ground, they always gallantly indemnify themselves for past hardship and fatigue by galloping like mad. As for my own sensations in the character of passenger in the Char they are not, physically speaking, of the pleasantest possible kind. I can only keep myself inside my vehicle by dint of holding tight with both hands by anything I can find to grasp at; and I am so shaken throughout my whole anatomy that my very jaws clatter again, and my feet play a perpetual tattoo on the bottom of the Char. Did I hit on no method of travelling more composed and deliberate than this, I wonder, when I was last in Switzerland? Must I make up my mind to be half-shaken to pieces if I am bold enough to venture on going there again?

The surface of the Black Mirror is once more clouded over. It clears, and the vision is now of a path along the side of a precipice. A mule is following the path, and I am the adventurous traveller who is astride on the beast's back. The first observation that occurs to me in my new position is, that mules thoroughly deserve their reputation for obstinacy, and that, in regard to the particular animal on which I am riding, the less I interfere with him and the more I conduct myself as if I was a pack-saddle on his back, the better we are sure to get on together.

Carrying pack-saddles is his main business in life; and though he saw me get on his back, he persists in treating me as if I was a bale of goods, by walking on the extreme edge of the precipice, so as not to run any risk of rubbing his load against the safe, or mountain, side of the path. In this and in other things I find that he is the victim of routine, and the slave of habit. He has a way of stopping short, placing himself in a slanting position, and falling into a profound meditation at some of the most awkward turns in the wild mountain-roads. I imagine at first that he may be halting in this abrupt and inconvenient manner to take breath; but then he never exerts himself so as to tax his lungs in the smallest degree, and he stops on the most unreasonably irregular principles, sometimes twice in ten minutes,—sometimes not more than twice in two hours—evidently just as his new ideas happen to absorb his attention or not. It is part of his aggravating character at these times, always to become immersed in reflection where the muleteer's staff has not room to reach him with the smallest effect; and where, loading him with blows being out of the question, loading him with abusive language is the only other available process for getting him on. I find that he generally turns out to be susceptible to the influence of injurious epithets after he

has heard himself personally insulted five or six times. Once, his obdurate nature gives way, even at the third appeal. He has just stopped with me on his back to amuse himself, at a dangerous part of the road, with a little hard thinking in a steeply slanting position; and it becomes therefore urgently necessary to abuse him into proceeding forthwith. First, the muleteer calls him a Serpent—he never stirs an inch. Secondly, the muleteer calls him a Frog—he goes on imperturbably with his meditation. Thirdly, the muleteer roars out indignantly, Ah sacré nom d'un Butor! (which, interpreted by the help of an Anglo-French dictionary, means apparently, Ah, sacred name of a Muddlehead!); and at this extraordinary adjuration the beast instantly jerks up his nose, shakes his ears, and goes on his way indignantly.

Mule-riding, under these circumstances, is certainly an adventurous and amusing method of travelling, and well worth trying for once in a way; but I am not at all sure that I should thoroughly enjoy a second experience of it, and I have my doubts on this account—to say nothing of my dread of a second jolting journey in a Char—about the propriety of undertaking another trip to Switzerland during the present sultry season. It will be wisest, perhaps, to try the effect of a new scene from the past, representing some former visit to some other locality, before I venture on arriving at a final decision. I have rejected Austrian Italy and German Switzerland, and I am doubtful about Switzerland Proper. Suppose I do my duty as a patriot, and give the attractions of my own country a fair chance of appealing to any past influences of the agreeable kind, which they may have exercised over me? Black Mirror! when I was last a tourist at home, how did I travel about from place to place?

The cloud on the magic surface rises slowly and grandly, like the lifting of a fog at sea, and discloses a tiny drawing-room, with a skylight window, and a rose-coloured curtain drawn over it to keep out the sun. A bright book-shelf runs all round this little fairy chamber, just below the ceiling, where the cornice would be in larger rooms. Sofas extend along the wall on either side, and mahogany cupboards full of good things ensconce themselves snugly in the four corners. The table is brightened with nosegays, the mantel-shelf has a smart railing all round it, and the looking-glass above is just large enough to reflect becomingly the face and shoulders of any lady who will give herself the trouble of looking into it. The present inhabitants of the room are three gentlemen with novels and newspapers in their hands, taking their ease in blouses, dressing-gowns, and slippers. They are reposing on the sofas with fruit and wine within easy reach of their hands, and one of them looks to me very much like the enviable possessor of the Black Mirror. They exhibit a spectacle of luxury which would make an ancient Spartan shudder with disgust; and, in an adjoining apartment, their band is attending on them, in the shape of a musical box which is just now playing the last scene in Lucia di Lammermoor. Hark! what sounds are those mingling with the notes of Donizetti's lovely music—now rising over it sublimely, now dying away under it, gently and more gently still? Our sweet opera air shall come to its close, our music shall play for its short destined time and then be silent again; but those more glorious sounds shall go on with us day and night, shall still swell and sink inexhaustibly, long after we and all who know and love and remember us have passed from this earth for ever. It is the wash of the waves that now travels along with us grandly wherever we go. We are at sea in the fastest fairest schooner yacht afloat, and are taking our pleasure all along the southern shores of the English coast.

Yes, this to every man who can be certain of his own stomach, this is the true luxury of travelling, the true secret for thoroughly enjoying all the attractions of moving about from place to place. Wherever we now go we carry our elegant and comfortable home along with us. We can stop where we like, see what we like, and always come back to our favourite corner on the sofa, always carry on our favourite occupations and amusements, and still be travelling, still be getting forward to new scenes all the time. Here is no hurrying to accommodate yourself to other people's hours for starting, no scrambling for places, no wearisome watchfulness over baggage. Here are no anxieties about strange beds,—for have we not each of us our own sweet little cabin to nestle in at night?—no agitating dependence at the dinner hour upon the vagaries of strange cooks—for have we not our own sumptuous larder always to return to, our own accomplished and faithful culinary artist always waiting to minister to our special tastes? We can walk and sleep, stand up or lie down just as we please, in our floating travelling-carriage. We can make our own road, and trespass nowhere. The bores we dread, the letters we don't want to answer, cannot follow and annoy us. We are the freest travellers under Heaven; and we find something to interest and attract us through every hour of the day. The ships we meet, the trimming of our sails, the varying of the weather, the everlasting innumerable changes of the ocean, afford constant occupation for eye and ear. Sick, indeed, must that libellous traveller have been who first called the sea monotonous—sick to death, and perhaps, born brother also to that other traveller of evil renown, the first man who journeyed from Dan to Beersheba, and found all barren.

Rest then awhile unemployed, my faithful

Black Mirror! The last scene you have shown me is sufficient to answer the purpose for which I took you up. Towards what point of the compass I may turn after leaving London is more than I can tell; but this I know, that my next post-horses shall be the winds, my next stages coast-towns, my next road over the open waves. I will be a sea-traveller once more, and will put off resuming my land journeyings until the arrival of that most obliging of all convenient periods of time—a future opportunity.

THE ORSONS OF EAST AFRICA.

Among the nooks of the world that have not been explored by Europeans there are some of all sizes in Africa, and until the English Hajji—who has visited the shrines of the prophet—Captain R. F. Burton, obtained leave to visit Harar, and did visit Harar, that town together with the districts round about it was among the places known only by rumour. What Timbuctoo used to be to Western Africa, Harar has been to Eastern Africa. What the Geographical Society recommended, what the East India Company undertook, why and how Mr. Burton, disgused as an Arab merchant, went to Harar and returned alive—not quite two years ago; how he set out again, what misadventure happened; and why ships of the East Indian Navy now overawe Berberah—we must leave any one, who will, to read in Captain Burton's very interesting book. We mean neither to review that book nor to sketch its contents, but simply by help of it to amuse ourselves with a few sketches of the way of life in a remote region, about which none of our countrymen have heretofore had, from their own knowledge, anything to tell. Of course, there is a strong family-likeness among many African tribes, and, to a great extent, as are the known, so are the unknown. Of course, also,—but as to the matters of course—why need they be mentioned?

Distinctly warned that he was going to his death, Captain Burton sailed from Aden with his chosen attendants. The slipper of blessing was thrown after him, the anchor raised, and, once at sea, the pilgrim's comrades removed from their heads the turbans of civilisation, wore only their black skins and their loin-cloths, and betook themselves to their own natural ways. One chewed his tobacco and ashes, another smoked his tobacco through the shankbone of a goat, while others made use of their own shankbones as napkins, after fearful meals of holcus-grain and grease. There is courtesy among these savages, nevertheless. Abdy Abokr—who, because of his rascality, was called by his friends, alluding to the corruption prophesied as coming in the latter days, the End of Time—Abdy Abokr would not profane anything so reverend as the hair upon his master's chin, by naming it in plain and ugly words. He used similitudes. Did he observe a grain of rice sticking about his sacred beard, he would say, "The Gazelle is in the garden," to which his master, promising to remove it with his fingers, answered, "We will hunt her with the five."

Zayla was the pilgrim's landing-place, a town approached by a creek which coral reefs make difficult of navigation, and which is described as a strip of sulphur yellow-sand, with a deep blue dome above, and foreground of the darkest indigo. Upon the yellow strip is the old Arab town seen in the shape of a long row of white houses and minarets, peering over a low line of brown wall, flanked by towers. Having landed in a cock-boat the travellers put on, while upon the beach, clean tobes—the tobe is a seamless white robe, the dress proper to the region—took shields and lances, and at the seaward-gate of the town were met by a tall, black spearsman, with a—"Ho, there! To the governor!" The native crowd poured out into the dusty streets to see the strangers pass to the reception-chamber, where they had an eastern interview with not a cup of coffee or a pipe to break its dulness. There is not a coffee-house in Zayla, and as for the neighbouring Bedouins, they say, philosophically, "If we drink coffee once, we shall want it again, and then where are we to get it?" A little further on, the Abyssinian Christians positively make it a point of conscience to object to coffee and tobacco, while the Gallas tribes take it when out on forages, not infused, but powdered and made into a ball with butter.

Zayla is a town about as large as Suez, built for three or four thousand inhabitants, and containing a dozen large whitewashed stone-houses with some two hundred thatched huts, each surrounded by a fence of wattle and matting. Favourite building-materials are mud and coralline. There is a good deal of open space within the walls, and the town is cooler and healthier than Aden. It exports slaves, ivory, hides, honey, antelope-horns, clarified butter, and gums, and its coast abounds in sponge and coral, and small pearls.

Provisions are cheap. A family may live there upon thirty pounds a-year, eating much meat and no vegetables, except holcus-grain, rice, and boiled wheat. In case any one disposed to make the most of a small income should think of setting out for Zayla, we will give some further notice of the way to live there. Breakfast at six in the morning, upon roast mutton and sour grain-cakes, visitors looking in to help. Then sleep. Then sit up to receive company that will come and must not be denied. Native gentlemen will enter by the dozen, taking off their slippers at the door, deposit their spears in a corner, shake hands and sit down for unceremonious talk. In their talk these people pride themselves upon a style of conversation not effeminately

civil. Your friends will comb their own hair while they entertain you, and will watch the barber as he gives your head (but, of course, not your chin) its morning shave.

At eleven before noon, when the fresh water has come from the wells, which are three or four miles distant from the town, the time will have arrived for dining upon greasy mutton stew, boiled rice, maize cakes and curds. There are fowls, but the neighbours will not like to see a person eating birds, and of course there will be neighbours to watch and help at the dining; there is fish also in plenty, and it may be eaten, but there is chance then that the Bedouins may say, "Speak not to me with that mouth which eateth fish."

After dinner, the house having been cleared of visitors, sleep may be enjoyed, until, at two o'clock, there is a clamour of more neighbours at the outer door, who come to spend the afternoon. Towards sunset one may go out for a walk, taking the shantarah-board, —which is the East African draught-board,— for a game under the shade, or if disposed to practise with the neighbours, one may leap and throw the javelin. At the southern gate the boys may be seen playing at hockey, or the citizens may be joined in one of their great matches of ball. These are so roughly played, that at the end of every game the scanty and old clothing that the players choose to wear, is taken home in rags; there is also, when the match is over, much dancing and shouting of the victors, who proceed in triumph through the town. Beyond the hockey-players and the ball-players, one may pass also into an encampment of the Bedouins which is outside the gate. These suburban people dwell in low and smoky tents, carry shield, spear and dagger, and have huge heads of shock hair, dyed red, and wet with butter. Each head of hair carries as ornaments its three-pronged comb, and the stick used as a scratcher when the owner does not wish to grease his fingers. Some heads are adorned also with the ostrich plume, which means that he who wears it has destroyed a man,—not necessarily in open fight, more commonly by stealth or treachery.

Before sunset it is necessary to return into the town, because at sunset all the gates are locked, and the call sounds to evening prayer. Whoso neglects prayer at the five prayer-times on Friday—the Moslem sabbath—suffers bastinado. But, there are ways, and again ways, of praying. Captain Burton heard one of the natives of these parts lamenting in the night season. She was suffering from toothache, and the groans of her spirit were, "Oh, Allah, may thy teeth ache like mine! Oh, Allah, may thy gums be sore as mine!"

Neighbours assist, finally, in shortening the hours of night over supper and superstitious talk,—they talk of men who take hyena forms, tell fortunes with beads, or talk of what Arabs call El Iksar (with us the Elixir) which, in this part of the world, is a kind of wood that causes milk-pails to be full of silver. They talk also of vampyres, of the evil eye, of mischief brewed by women. "Wit in a woman," one says, "is a habit of running away in a dromedary."—"Allah," says another, "made woman of a crooked bone; he who would straighten her, breaketh her."

At an early hour visitors depart, mats are spread, and one may go to bed Somali fashion, with the head upon a hollow pedestal of wood for a pillow. And one may sleep well if, during the day, too much kat has not been chewed.

The leaves of the drug called kat are the chief source of pleasurable excitement in these districts of East Africa. Botanists, taking the native name for the plant, turn it into Catha edulis, eatable kat. It is much used by the Arabs, to whom it is sent in camel loads, consisting of a number of small parcels, each containing about forty slender twigs, with the leaves attached, carefully wrapped, so as to avoid exposure to the air. These leaves are chewed, and act upon the spirits of those using them, much as a strong dose of green tea acts upon us in Europe, when it acts agreeably. Europeans used to stronger stimulants, are little affected by the use of kat, but among the more temperate Arabs it is so welcome a provocative to good humour, that about two hundred and eighty camel-loads of it are used every year in Aden only.

The way to Harar is among eaters of kat, across a land that is a Goshen to the druggist; a land in which the castor oil plant flourishes, where aloes abound, where the wind rustles through leaves of senna; where the torrent beds are overgrown with long lines of green colocynth, and one meets constantly with clumps of jujube trees. There are serpents in those regions, which the native Somal hold it to be a religious act when possible to kill. It is a religious act also to kill a crow, —for the crow, which was created a white bird, became black through sin. When the holy prophet and Abubekr were hidden in the cave, the pigeon also hid there, and avoided the pursuers, but the crow sat outside and screamed "Ghar! ghar!" (the cave! the cave!) whereupon Mahomet ordered him into eternal mourning for his traitorous behaviour.

After a very considerable delay, Mr. Burton and his little caravan succeeded in departing out of Zayla, under the care of an Abban or protector, which is the dignified shape assumed in those parts by a guide. The ruler at Zayla could not comprehend the disguised Englishman's intention. Small-pox was depopulating Harar, the road swarmed with brigands, the Prince of Harar would certainly destroy him; and besides, he said privately, for he knew what was below the Arab merchant's dress, "If the English wish

to take Harar, let them send me five hundred soldiers; if not, I can give all information." The Abban, who engaged only to go a certain distance, gave warning also of disaster. The cold, he said—for it was then late in the year—had driven the wandering tribes down from the hills into the warm plains they were to traverse; and, as Abdy Abokr, the End of Time, remarked, in comment hereupon, "Man eats you up; the desert does not." Just then, too, the Ayyal Nuh Ismail, a wild tribe of troopers armed with assegai, dagger, and shield, was out, and having overcome the Eesa, scoured the plains in search of men to kill that they might earn their ostrich plumes. The dangers of the desert were increased, therefore, though always great enough. "In the desert," says the proverb, "all men are enemies." Whenever a fellow-creature is seen from afar, the right arm is waved violently up and down—there is a shouting of War Ioga! War Ioga! (Stand still! Stand still!) Does the stranger halt, there is a cautious parley; does he advance, he is attacked instantly.

Yet, neither among the Somali nor among the Bedouins did the English pilgrim find that by such a picture of life in the desert of East Africa, a whole truth, or even a half truth, was expressed. The Somali are indeed a race living in no enviable way. It is their pleasure to pick among their wiry locks with a stick, separate each hair from its tuft, and crown their heads, when they are not rich enough to shave and wear the turban, with a crop like that on our old coachmen's wigs; they get rid of its natural black colour with a wash of ashes, or a mixture of quicklime and water; they have good heads, except the mouth, which has African lips, discoloured by the use of ashes as a sharpener of the tobacco quid, and which contains gums mottled and teeth discoloured by the same habit of chewing. Except for this, they look well with their light straw-coloured hair decked with a waving feather, and their coal-black complexions set off by the graceful drapery of the white tobe. But they live not very happily: merry abroad, they are at home a melancholy race of shepherds, who will sit for hours with their eyes on the moon, or crooning their old ditties under trees. The land is full of poets, and, without a written character, has yet a literature of some thousands of known songs. The people are perhaps sad because danger is ever present: ever the nearer and more constant; ever the more dreaded, because they are all more wily than valorous. The Bedouins, too, were found to be a simple and not very happy race; the Arabs have called their country Bilad-wa-Issi, the Land of Give me Something; but they are, nevertheless, ready to give out of their poverty. They pressed upon the traveller milk, mutton, and wives; not seldom one of them would say to our pilgrim in a pitying voice, "What hath brought thee, delicate as thou art, to sit with us on the cow-hide, in this cold, under a tree?"

The Somali women are soft-spoken and laborious; they do more work than the men. They are bought in marriage of their fathers, and after marriage, when the husband first enters the nuptial hut, he draws forth a whip, and therewith chastises his bride, that any tendency to shrewishness may be at once extracted from her temper. About four wives are the usual allowance, but there is free use of the power of divorce. Among these people kissing is unknown.

It was nearly the end of November, in the year before last, when Captain Burton, with his little caravan of five camels, mules, and so forth, carrying all necessaries, set out from Zayla to unveil, if possible, the mysteries of Harar.

The first trace of unfriendly greeting on the road was effaced by the shooting of a vulture before people by whom swan-shot never had been seen. The women exclaimed, "Lo! he bringeth down the birds from heaven!" and one old man, putting his fingers in his mouth, praised Allah. Of this old man a friend was made; he spat on the whole party for good luck; and eventually extricated them from some slight difficulty with his tribe.

Beautiful in the desert are the wells, among the tamarisks shining with vivid green against an amethyst blue sky. The banks of these sweet perlets are wooded with acacias of many kinds, festooned with creepers and parasites that sometimes form natural bowers carpeted inside with juicy grass. From the thinner thorns, pendulous birds'-nests hang, and birds of bright plumage make the wood ring with their notes. Beautiful in the Somali desert are the wells, but no man lingers by their side, where he may meet the fellow-man whose face he dreads; no traveller pitches his tent where snake-trails are upon the sand, and where at night the leopard, and the lion, and the elephant, come down to drink.

Serpents are common in the wilds of Eastern Africa; to kill one is counted by the Somali almost as meritorious as to destroy an infidel. They are the subject of many superstitions. One horn of the Cerastes, it is said, contains a deadly poison; the other, pounded and drawn across the eye, makes man a seer, and reveals to him the treasures of the earth. There is a flying snake which hoards jewels, and is attended by a hundred guards. A Somali horseman once carried away a jewel, and was pursued by a reptile army. He escaped to his tribe, upon which there then came so much trouble through serpents that the treasure was restored.

In the course of his march Captain Burton proved the feebleness of the Somali race. They are intolerant of thirst; on a sustained journey they are scarcely able to carry their

own spears, and often sit on them to spare their shoulders: they are now dismounting because their saddles hurt them, then mounting again because their legs are tired. "An English boy of fourteen," says our pilgrim, "would have shown more bottom than the sturdiest."

The two hundred miles or thereabouts of travel from Zayla to Harar, we mean to clear almost at a bound. We mention only the wild ostriches, the falling upon the fresh track of two hundred Habrawal horsemen, against whom what is a cavalcade of nine men, seven of them arrant cowards, and two serving-women? "Verily, O Pilgrim!" cries the End of Time, "whoso seeth the track, seeth the foe," and he hums, in despair,

> Man is but a handful of dust,
> And life is a violent storm.

We must not dwell on the escape among thorns, the nights spent among the flies and vermin, of deserted kraals, declared to be the only safe places of rest; or say much of the setting out of tribes who quit a kraal—in one instance leaving the sick and infirm behind, to perish miserably and lie at the mercy of the lions and hyenas. They who were guilty of this last-mentioned barbarity were Eesa Bedouins, of whose race it had been said, at Zayla, that its men are the types of treachery—wretches who, with the left hand, offer a bowl of milk, and with the right hand stab. They are blacker, uglier, and balder than their neighbours; but they have piercing well-trained eyes, often have good profiles; and some of their girls, we are told, have fine forms with piquant features. They are both more hospitable and more murderous than the other Somali, so that there was some reason for the symbol of the milk in one hand and the dagger in the other. They scorn theft unaccompanied with homicide, and they are not, like their neighbours, noted liars. These people importuned our pilgrim, as he passed through, to settle among them, offering him sundry wives; and they flattered him by saying, that after a few days' residence he would become quite one of themselves. The true wealth of these men lies in their flocks and herds. "Sheep and goats," they say, "are of silver, and the cow of gold."

Then presently there was the march up from the maritime plain by the ghauts to the first fringe of Ethiopian highlands. So the path of the pilgrim led him to the Gudabirsi, his companions hunting for news by the way. "News liveth," said the End of Time; and it is strange to be told how it lives in those wild places. Captain Burton found the wild Gudabirsi talking with much interest about the Russian war; and heard at Harar of a violent storm which had, only a few weeks before it was there discussed damaged the shipping in the harbour of Bombay.

About the tombs of the Gudabirsi, passed sometimes upon the march, a word ought to be said. They are heaps of stone surrounded by a fence of thorns or loose blocks. Little stone houses on each grave, such houses as children at play would make out of pile stones, indicate by their number the rank of the deceased—how many establishments he kept. The dead man's milk-pails are hung on a stick at his grave-head; on a neighbouring tree has been thrown the mat that bore him to his burial; and hard by are the ashes of his funeral feast.

On went the travellers, till from a height there was in view a golden streak on the horizon; and that was the journey's end—the Harar prairie.

When within sight of the success for which he had been labouring, the adventurer fell sick; and had he been content to turn his face to the wall, might have died, although he was in truth tenderly nursed by the wild people, and had his stomach burnt affectionately in six places by the End of Time. "The end of physic is fire," said that sententious worthy. Cautery, chiefly in the form of a rude moxa, is in great favour among the Somali, who believe that disease and fire cannot exist together. The danger was overcome, and the journey continued by a traveller who, as an Englishman, knew that he must not succumb. But the Englishman had learned enough about the sun and the dry wind of Africa to regard, as not the least of breakfast luxuries, the pat of butter, not provided to be eaten, but to be smeared over head and body.

To enter upon the Harar prairie was, in the opinion of the outlying tribes, to pass the gates of death. Yet, as Harar was approached, the travellers came into a cultivated land, found reapers at work with tiny sickles upon yellow crops of holcus; men thrashing and winnowing; women husking the pineapple-formed heads of the holcus in their mortars made out of a hollowed trunk, washing the threshing-floors with cow-dung and water, as defence from insects; heaping the heads of grain up into cunning patterns, and surrounding them and the straw-heaps with thorn fences, to protect them from the plunderings of the wild hog. There was something hopeful in thus coming on a harvest-home after a journey through the desert. So Harar was reached at last; the camels and the luggage—all but a few necessaries that would travel in a pair of saddle-bags upon a single mule—being left, with the cowards and the women, in the hands of an adjacent prince, lord indeed of that harvest, who had treated them well; and, taken them into his royal dwelling—or, as Mr. Burton says, his smoky closet, or, as the nursery song would say, his counting-house—and fed them royally with bread and honey. Much had depended on the favour of this man, the Gerad Adan. He fortunately hap-

pened to have a fancy for a fort, and felt it to be worth his while to bestow bread and honey and good will upon a man who might, perchance, assist him in obtaining what he wanted. He could give no escort into Harar, because with the emir there he was on border terms not altogether friendly.

At the foot of a round bastion outside one of the gates of Harar the pilgrims sat at three o'clock in the afternoon, on the third of January, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five. There, surrounded by a curious and mocking crowd, they awaited the permission of the Prince to cross his threshold. This arrived, the town was entered, and approach was made to the gate of holcus stalks, which opens on the courtyard of the palace. Ordered to dismount when within a hundred yards of this gate, the strangers were led into the yard itself, and placed under a tree in one corner, close to a low building, from within which there came ominous sounds of the clank of fetters. The courtyard was full of Gallas, lounging and squatting, the chiefs with their zinc armlets almost covering the forearm, privileged to wear their sandals in the royal precincts and to carry spears. The palace itself proved to be a mere long windowless shed of rough stone and clay, its dignity being expressed by a thin dab of whitewash set up as a sign over the door. For, to the edification of our English cotters in their white-washed kitchens, be it said that at Harar a coat of whitewash means more than with us—a coat of arms; it is a distinction only granted to the king and vizier. The most valuable part of a house at Harar is the door, and when a subject, summoned to appear before his prince, neglects to obey the summons, his door is removed on the first day of his disobedience and on the second day is confiscated. Divers unhinged doors propped against a block of masonry in the centre of the courtyard, proved that the Emir kept this law in force.

With slippers doffed, the pilgrims, ordered next to pass a curtain, stood in a dark room, with whitewashed walls hung with old matchlocks and polished fetters. There they were in the presence of the emir, or the Sultan Ahmad bin Sultan Abibakr, a yellow stunted youth of twenty-four or five, with sickly form and bony kite claws, sitting cross-legged in a red robe and a conical cap and turban, on a throne that much resembled a green garden seat. As an invalid he rested one arm on a pillow, under which appeared the hilt of a Cutch sabre.

The general expectation was, that from the mighty presence, the intruders of whom evil accounts had been brought already to Harar by unfriendly witnesses, would depart only to be conveyed into those filthy state dungeons which lie under and about the royal premises. There, prisoners die in their fetters of starvation and disease, being allowed no food except such as their friends will bring them, or as they are themselves able to purchase from their guards. Captain Burton happily succeeded in obtaining credit in the character of an ambassador with a congratulatory message from the English chief at Aden, and a gracious smile taking the place of a frown, assured him and his companions of their safety. They were removed into the emir's second palace, bidden to consider it their home, and hospitably regaled from his own kitchen with a feast of holcus-cakes soaked in sour milk, and thickly seasoned with red pepper.

When they had eaten, they were ordered to present themselves before the vizier. Him they found to be a genial old man, living in a small room royally whitewashed and adorned with wooden porringers, like an old kitchen. He sat on a carpeted masonry bench, and had before him his official reeds and inkstands. In those savage parts of the world there is no red tape, and whitewashed boards are employed as the substitute for paper.

Auspicious as this beginning was, yet after all the English traveller would perhaps never have escaped to tell what he had seen in Harar, had not a native youth come to the town with news that three brothers (Captain Burton and the two civilised associates in his enterprise) had landed in the Somali country, that two of them were anxiously waiting at Berberah the return of the third from Harar, and that, although dressed like moslems, they were really Englishmen in government employ. English at Berberah can ruin Harar by the cutting off of caravans, and so our adventurer had his permission to depart granted one morning at about the time of kat-eating. Having it, he lost no time in using it, but of his subsequent adventures and misadventures, and of all that he saw at Harar, let it be enough that his book tells. We have cared only to suggest what sort of life he found among the noble savages on ground that has been, until now, untrodden by English feet.

CHIP.

SIGNALS AND ENGINE-DRIVERS.

It has been my fortune in life to pass a good deal of time on the foot-plate of a locomotive engine; and, although not a driver, to be pretty well initiated into the mysteries of engine-driving. As the result of this experience, I have arrived at the conclusion that the life of an engine-driver is a very responsible, a very hazardous, and a very hard life, and that anything we can do to lessen the hazard or ameliorate its hardships will gain for us the thanks of an intelligent, vigilant, and courageous class of men.

It is only lately that is has been thought

worth while to protect these men from the weather; and even now, since the introduction of the weather board, the simple and excellent plan adopted on the Caledonian and a few other railways, of a sloping board attached to it, at an easy angle overhead, is, it would seem, too simple and useful a contrivance to meet with the approbation of our large railway companies; but if the chairman of directors were to turn driver for a week in winter, he might possibly be convinced of the utility of other boards besides that over which he presides.

It is not so much comfort, however, as safety that is desired; and, until we introduce a better system of signals than the one at present in use, this desirable object can never be attained. The late deplorable accident at Church Fenton, when the lives of several passengers were sacrificed to the carelessness of a lad of fifteen, is sufficient to show the faultiness of the present economy. The plan at present in use we all know is, that a driver shall assume everything to be right until he is told by signal that it is wrong, thus virtually placing his life and the lives of the public in the hands of the signalman. What I would suggest is, that the driver shall assume everything to be wrong until he is told by signal that everything is right; thus allowing the public to have the vigilance of two men in the place of one as a guarantee for their protection. For the sake of example, let us imagine an express train starting from King's Cross down the Great Northern. On approaching Colney Hatch station, the driver sees the signal for him to stop—the danger signal, in fact, exhibited. He sounds his whistle interrogatively, and immediately the signal is changed into one which signifies all right; and, without pausing on his journey, he has the satisfaction of knowing that the signalman is at his post and attending to his duty. Should there be no alteration made in the signal, his alternative would of course be to stop; and, if it should appear that this arose from the inattention of the signal-man, the fact might be reported to head-quarters. The passengers in the train would know at the same time that the driver is attending to his duty.

That the greatest number of accidents arise from the neglect of the signal-man, and not of the driver, anyone who reads the statistics of these occurrences may satisfy himself. That they occur in too many instances from a false economy on the part of the railway companies. The plan I have proposed, then, of what might be termed affirmative signalling, will not only be acceptable to the companies for its economy—for then, with the experience of the driver to fall back upon, they may safely entrust the signal to boys—but will satisfy the public that their safety is not entrusted solely to the vigilance of one individual.

P.S. Since writing the above I have seen the same system in extenso advocated in the Times.

MY JOURNAL.

It is a dreary evening;
The shadows rise and fall;
With strange and ghostly changes,
They flicker on the wall.

Make the charred logs burn brighter;
I will show you, by their blaze,
The half-forgotten record
Of bygone things and days.

Bring here the ancient volume;
The clasp is old and worn,
The gold is dim and tarnished,
And the faded leaves are torn.

The dust has gathered on it—
There are so few who care
To read what Time has written
Of joy and sorrow there.

Look at the first fair pages;
Yes,—I remember all:
The joys now seem so trivial,
The griefs so poor and small.

Let us read the dreams of glory
That childish fancy made;
Turn to the next few pages,
And see how soon they fade.

Here, where still waiting, dreaming,
For some ideal Life,
The young heart all unconscious
Had entered on the strife,

See how the page is blotted.
What—could those tears be mine?
How coolly I can read you,
Each blurred and trembling line.

Now I can reason calmly,
And looking back again,
Can see divinest meaning
Threading each separate pain.

Here strong resolve—how broken,
Rash hope, and foolish fear,
And prayers, which God in pity
Refused to grant or hear.

Nay—I will turn the pages
To where the tale is told
Of how a dawn diviner
Flushed the dark clouds with gold.

And see, that light has gilded
The story—nor shall set,
And, though in mist and shadow,
You know I see it yet;

Here—well, it does not matter,
I promised to read all;
I know not why I falter,
Or why my tears should fall;

You see each grief is noted;
Yet it was better so—
I can rejoice to-day—the pain
Was over, long ago.

I read—my voice is failing,
But you can understand
How the heart beat that guided
This weak and trembling hand.

Pass over that long struggle,
Read where the comfort came,
And when the first is written
Within the book your name.

Again it comes, and of'ner
Linked, as it now must be,
With all the joy or sorrow
That Life may bring to me.

So all the rest—you know it:
Now shut the clasp again,
And put aside the record
Of bygone hours of pain.

The dust shall gather on it,
I will not read it more:—
Give me your hand—what was it
We were talking of before?

I know not why—but tell me
Of something gay and bright.
It is strange—my heart is heavy,
And my eyes are dim to-night.

TAXES.

TAXATION is one of the fundamental pivots of all legislation and government. The ruler who taxes well and wisely, is a blessing to his people; the tyrant who taxes iniquitously, is a scourge and a curse. Nor is it the mere gross amount of taxation which constitutes the crushing or the well-applied impost. As, in the body corporeal, there are spots where a slight touch will cause acute pain; others, where a ruder brush will tickle; and others, where a gentle blow or pressure will scarcely have the effect of awakening attention;—so, in the body politic, the hand of the tax-gatherer will hardly be felt here; will meet with no resistance there; while, elsewhere, its application will cause fearful convulsions. A heavy hair-powder tax is truly comical, when we think of tall footmen strutting proudly, because a little white dust has been sprinkled on their heads without regard to expense,—especially as we powder our babies, free. A moderate tax on private pleasure-carriages or show saddle-horses, will cause no complaint; because persons who complained of such a trifling addition to their outgoings, would convict themselves of living beyond their means, and of indulging in a luxury to which they had no right. But a salt-tax has furnished the incidents of many a tragic drama,—from sudden assassinations which have struck its collectors like a thunderbolt, to the slow but inevitable death from wasting, atrophy, and intestine pests, to which are condemned the pitiable victims who are debarred from that necessary of human life.

"Away with you! You hurt me," said the sheep to the crow, who was pulling a few flocks of wool to line his nest.

"What affectation!" answered the crow. "You let the shepherd shear you bare, without saying a word; and you make a great fuss, when I only pluck a handfull."

"Granted," rejoined the sheep. "It is true. But I hardly feel the shepherd's fingers, when he eases me of my hot and heavy coat; while you—get away with you, you peevish, cruel crow! Help, brother sheep! To arms! Down with the crow!"

Nations are flocks of sheep; and rulers should be shepherds and not crows; for the taxation to which a people consents voluntarily, is legitimate in the strictest sense. The first French Revolution was brought about very much in order to obtain the mastery over certain taxes,—aides, tailles, gabelle, capitation, main-mortes, droits, féodaux, corvées seigneuriales, and half-a-hundred other abominations. But people have willingly submitted to be taxed for the supply of acknowledged conveniences—sometimes even for the gratification of favourite and popular pleasures and indulgences. Never are taxes more readily paid than for common safety. When a leaky vessel threatens to founder, the despairing passenger will tax himself to the whole amount of his worldly goods, which he throws overboard, to lighten the ship. When an invader menaces to destroy households with fire, sword, and insult worse than death, the householder volunteers his utmost personal tax, his life even, to ward off the danger. Taxation, resolved to its primary intention and meaning, is the price of the protection afforded by the State to the goods of the tax-payer, comprising in the term "goods" his honour, his family, and his safe existence. He who has most to be protected, is reasonably called on to pay the highest price for the security he enjoys; that is, taxes should be levied according to value. All have something to be protected in time of need, even if they are inmates of a Union House or homeless beggars in a strange city; for they have themselves. Patents of nobility, privileged immunities, or the usurped conversion of a temporary into a perpetual and hereditary freedom from state imposts, can be no just ground for exemption from the payment of taxes. Unequal taxation has proved itself sufficiently volcanic to cause death-dealing earthquakes in the social world, and to upset thrones and dynasties.

The power of taxation, for evil, stands confessed; can it be made equally potent for good? Is it possible that a fair assignment of taxes over the surface of a country, and the just employment of the amount collected, should act as a bond of union, a spreader of peace, and an insurer of tranquillity, to the same degree that bad taxation is dangerous and explosive in its tendency? May that little-understood specific, TAX, be made to work medicinally with as great healing virtue as the history of the last century records it to have acted virulently as a poison? The problem is a noble one to solve.

The recent awful inundations in France have only fanned the flames of, instead of extinguishing, a controversy which has been discussed with gradually increasing

energy for some time past. Fourier, if he did not actually hatch, foster-fathered an idea which he called Garantisme. But no one gives a fair hearing to any proposition coming from Fourier. Since then, Emile de Girardin, the editor of La Presse newspaper, has worked the scheme, agitating and keeping it continually before the public with the ability he is so well known to possess. His grand project is no less than to engraft a general assurance on the national taxation, and to transform the payment of taxes into an assurance payment. The State would insure every individual against loss by fire, flood, or storm. The vastness of the undertaking frightens many; but independent of mundane motives, there is a party, comprising a certain sect of religionists, who regard the inundation as a penance inflicted by the immediate hand of Heaven, in punishment for national sins of commission and omission, and that the duty of inundated France is to bow her head in penitent submission, reform her conduct, correct her moral and religious delinquencies, leaving the palliatives and the remedies of the evils to be tended by the Power which has inflicted it. The same disparagement of social prudence has been put forward in times of cholera, epidemics, malaria fever curable by drainage, in cases of apoplectic sudden death, of preventible accidents by sea and land, and of the whole class of events that are swept into the grand category of public and of private judgments. Persons who entertain such views as these relative to divine and human providence, rarely advocate sweeping reforms.

Does anybody like to be taxed, as there are exceptional individuals who like to be despised? The Times is evidence that there are people who do. To such, De Girardin's scheme must be doubly welcome, from its combining the useful with the sweet. But it also involves a radical reform,—no less than utter abolition of the present confusion of taxes which, he says, not without reason, is a monstrous promiscuity of systems that exclude each other—a legal falsehood—a jumble of fiscal tyranny. Taxes are now assessed, sometimes on capital, sometimes on income; sometimes on the person, and sometimes on the thing; on the production and on the consumption—on the raw material and on the manufactured article, and are paid in money and in kind. All which discordant elements of a nation's revenue cry aloud for a reform, whose consequence would be the suppression of inequitable taxation, the establishment of a sole and unique tax, and the transformation of compulsory assessment into a voluntary assurance-payment. But how?

Thus: first,—for general principles. A tax ought to be no more than the contribution which every member of civilised society brings, that he may participate in the benefits of that civilisation. It ought to be proportioned to the advantages reaped by the contributor. Its object is to spread general welfare, and not to protect luxury.

In fixing the revenue of a nation, regard must be had both to the necessities of the state and the necessities of the citizen. The real wants of the people must not be curtailed to supply the imaginary wants of the state. The list of imaginary wants includes the things demanded by the passions and weaknesses of the individuals who govern, the charm of extraordinary projects, the diseased hankering after vain glory, and a certain weakness in resisting capricious fancies. The public revenue should be measured not by what a people is able to give, but by what it ought to be called upon to give. Taxes are not a burden imposed by strength on weakness; for government is not founded on the right of conquest as its leading principle. In such a case, the sovereign would be regarded as the common enemy of society; the strongest would defend themselves from taxation as well as they could, while the weak would submit to be crushed without resistance; and in the end, the rich and powerful would shift the whole weight from their own shoulders to those of the poor. Such a consummation hardly accords with the idea of a paternal government constitutionally conducted, where the monarch is raised above every one else, for the sake of the universal happiness of the nation.

A country is never utterly without resources; the great point is to search for them where they actually exist, and not where they are not to be found. Taxpayers are subscribers to, and shareholders in, a national undertaking; and they are entitled to a dividend of benefits, in proportion to the number of shares they pay for.

The levying of taxes may be compared to the action of the sun, which absorbs the mists from the earth, in order to distribute them afterwards in the form of rain on every spot which has need of water to render it fruitful. When this restitution is performed with regularity, fertility is the consequence; but when the heavens, in their anger, shower down the vapours they have imbibed in concentrated tempests and local waterspouts, the germs of reproduction are destroyed, and barrenness is the result; for too much rain is given to some, while others languish for the want of a sufficiency. Nevertheless, whatever may have been the beneficent, or the destructive action of the atmosphere, the same quantity of moisture has almost always been drawn from and restored to the earth. It is the distribution only which makes the difference. When equitable and regular, it creates abundance; when scanty and partial, it induces dearth. If the sums annually levied on the mass of a population are devoted to unproductive uses—such as the foundation of serviceless offices, the raising of sterile monuments, the maintenance in the midst of peace of a more expensive army than that

which conquered at Austerlitz—taxation becomes a crushing burden. It exhausts the country; for it takes away money without ever giving back money's worth. But if, on the contrary, fiscal resources are employed in the creation of new elements of productiveness, in re-establishing the equilibrium of wealth, in destroying poverty by unremitting and profitable employment of labour, then certainly the payment of taxes is the best investment that a patriotic citizen can make.

Taxation as it is, considered relatively to itself, has the unequal strength of living horses; which varies according to country, age, breed, health, and nutriment. Taxation, as it ought to be, should have the precise force of the standard steam-horse by which steam-power is estimated, which is constantly and universally the same, without the distinction of English or French, European or American. As soon as taxation—that is, what Monsieur de Girardin understands by taxation,—is adopted by one country on a proper basis (the prophecy is not so bold as it looks), it will be successively and immediately welcomed by all; for, to all, and to each, its advantages will be manifest. The unit of strength already exists—namely, the one-horse steam-power; the unit of the rail is also spreading; the units of coins and measures have only a feeble and final effort to make, in order to pass from the condition of a general desideratum to the rank of an accomplished fact, in spite of the Committee of London Bankers, who weigh a national benefit against their own convenience, and find it wanting. The unit of taxation will be the crowning pinnacle of the grand edifice erected to Peace and Liberty. Unity of taxation is the means of dispersing the industrial and commercial complications which are assumed to be inextricable. Everything is simplified. The tight knot in that tangled skein which is styled free-exchange, is united of itself. Artificial inequalities fall to their level; natural inequalities are the only ones that survive. Superiority ceases to be relative by becoming absolute. There ought to be but one sole tax, everywhere the same, and so mathematically just that in fact it is obligatory, though in right it is voluntary.

And so runs on our high-mettled racer. Some of the preceding heats are rather sharp. For want of training, we require a moment's breathing time. It cannot be denied that the editor of La Presse is a rattling literary pugilist, who renders the service of a bottle-holder far from superfluous between the rounds. But time is up; let us at it again.

One tax, without exception or reservation! What a holiday for the Chancellor of the Exchequer! And a tax on what? On consumption, on income, or on capital? The taxing of articles of consumption is the opposite pole to unity of impost, for it is necessarily a diversity of impost; so that tax will not do, setting every other objection aside. A tax on income is equally objectionable, from the innumerable forms into which income varies; it may be the amount of annual profits made, of wages earned, or of interest paid by invested capital. The incomes derived from commerce, banking, agriculture, the arts, the sciences, and industrial labour, are essentially variable and unseizable. Many a man may gain ten thousand francs one year, to lose twenty thousand the following; many a vineyard which gives this year six thousand francs worth of wine shall cost next season for its culture three thousand francs more than its produce; many an artisan may work three hundred days in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-six who will not work a hundred in 'fifty-seven. The porter, the cabman, the merchant, the portrait painter, the surgeon, the barrister, the attorney, the auctioneer—in short, whoever exercises any calling, profession, or trade, is unable to say what will be his salary, his gains, or his profit at the expiration of the twelvemonth. Even in the same calling there are inequalities. A farm-labourer may be boarded in the house, or may have to board himself. Peter is an out-door journeyman, without board; he earns six hundred francs. James is a servant, well fed in doors, with three hundred francs wages. How will you manage to establish the quantity of tax which Peter ought to pay as compared with James? Will you estimate the board? If so, on what basis? No; an income-tax is out of the question, if you want to combine simplicity with justice. An income-tax may be compared to a shifting sand, on which you attempt to construct a jetty or a harbour. It is a basis deficient in the primary condition of every solid foundation—namely, in fixity.

M. de Girardin's tax is the antipodes of an income-tax; he calls for a tax on capital. A capital tax is the egg of Christopher Columbus; it is the pyramid seated on its base, consolidating itself by its own weight; it is the torrent which digs its own bed, and raises a dike against its own inundations; it is a revolution without insurgents; it is progress without disturbance; it is motion without collision; in short, it is ideal simplicity and legislative verity.

Take capital as the basis of your taxation—instantly, locked-up capital begins to circulate; the capital which slept awakes; the capital employed redoubles its efforts and stimulates credit. Capital can no longer remain idle and unproductive for a single instant, without paying the penalty of suffering diminution of its sum. It is condemned to forced activity. Timid capital takes courage; for, the tax on capital being the same, whether it produces three or six per cent., capital, by the first of natural laws—the law of self-preservation—will strive to obtain the highest interest possible. Instead of burying

itself passively in the earth, which is the destiny of capital in retirement, it will struggle forward into active life and open for itself a fresh career. Land will lose its prestige as a subject of investment, and will be restored to the cultivator, who uses it as his tool, his machinery, his factory establishment for the production of marketable and useful articles. But now, as it is, every day reveals a new vice and a new inequality in the actual system of multiple taxation; it is an old state vessel, a worn-out lord mayor's barge, whose hull leaks from stem to stern, and which sets the caulkers at defiance. A tax on capital allows no privilege to idle capital. By treating it as if it were productive, it compels it to become so. An incomes tax restrains like a bit; a capital-tax urges like a spur. An income-tax is arbitrary; a capital-tax is absolute and positive. Which of these taxes is the one to be preferred? If the question were put to that portion of the community whose only means of existence is their daily labour or their daily wage, nine-tenths of them would unhesitatingly answer, "A capital-tax." A capital-tax is a voluntary tax.

For what is taxation, and what ought it to be? A tax is, and ought to be, nothing else than an assurance paid by all the members of a society called the Nation, in order to insure the full enjoyment of their rights, the effectual protection of their interests, and the exercise of their faculties. Taxes ought to be paid like the money which insures a vessel against shipwreck, a house against fire, a field against hail, a herd against epidemic disease, a widow or an orphan against indigence—that is, voluntarily. The transformation of taxes into assurance, or voluntary taxation, is the idea destined to regenerate the old world, which now has a bayonet as the axis on which it turns, with Want and Luxury for the poles.

At first sight, many people might be inclined to think that such a thing as a voluntary tax is an imaginary supposition. But, instead of that, under the present state of things, taxes which are compulsory for the poor, are in a great measure voluntary for the rich, as the following example will show. Smite is a blacksmith, earning four shillings a day; but he is without work for three out of the twelve months, and so earns only forty or fifty pounds a-year. To exercise his craft, he is obliged to expend a considerable amount of strength, which he must restore under pain of falling ill. He is absolutely compelled to eat and drink in proportion to his expenditure of corporeal force. Consequently, at the end of the year, when the revenue has taken eight or nine pounds' worth of taxes out of his fifty pounds of wage, he has nothing left, or next to nothing.

Mr. Close is a miser, whose father left him some four or five hundred a-year, of which he only spends a pound or two a-week, in order to buy into the public funds whenever they are low. In the case, then, of Mr. Close, taxation is voluntary, while it is compulsory for Smite in the same ratio.

The new impost ought to be the assurance paid by all who possess anything, to insure themselves against every risk that can disturb their possession or their enjoyment. Among the highest of these risks may be reckoned, amongst continental nations, the disasters caused by revolutions. But revolutions will be utterly prevented by the elevation of government to the rank of a vast general and mutual Assurance Office. Did you ever know the persons insured by a company to annul the statutes which were their common guarantee? Did you ever know the fundholders of a state to destroy the records of the public debt? Did you ever know a pawnbroker to burn a pledge, or a lender on mortgage to call for the cancelling and suppression of mortgages?

Taxes, as they exist, encourage fraud; the proposed capital tax would suppress fraud. It places the tax-payer, or the assured party, urges M. Girardin, in constant equilibrium between two equal interests; he would be tempted to estimate his fortune too low, if it were not also his interest to value it above the mark. Does the proprietor who insures his house against fire, or the shipowner who insures against the risk of loss at sea, consider the premiums he pays in the light of a tax? No; he pays an assurance; and the benefit he expects to derive from it is the reason which induces him to take the step. The peculiarity of a tax is that it is forced from the payer; the peculiarity of assurance is, that it is a voluntary payment. The characteristic of assurance is to be levied on capital—of taxes, to be levied on income. What do you do when you insure your mansion, your furniture, or your yacht? You declare their value, and you certify its amount by every means that can give your declaration the highest degree of exactitude. If you value them at less than they are worth, you pay a lower premium; but also, in case of accident, will you be entitled to a smaller indemnity. These two composite considerations act in combination to make you state a sincere and exact estimate.

An assurance office does not ask what rent your house brings you in, but what it is worth; not what your furniture cost to buy, but what it would fetch if sold; not what would be the profit from your cargo on its arrival, but what it was valued at when the ship left port. Assurance is not fixed according to income; it is levied according to the value of an object at the moment when the assurance is effected. The unity of assurance is capital. Always and everywhere a thousand francs are a thousand francs; but a thousand francs do not produce the same income everywhere and always. When taxation is tranformed into assurance, it

ought to accept the same basis. The basis of assurance is capital. Finally—as far as the present journal is concerned—the unpopularity of power is put an end to. Power becomes popular, because it has become tutelary. Every disastrous accident attaches the people more firmly to it, just as every fire which breaks out in a county increases the number of insurances effected.

We have only to add that the above doctrines are not put forth by their apostles with the slightest consciousness or suspicion that they are dreams, but that they are serious plans that merit to be carried into effect. If you doubt our assertion, read L'Impôt, by Emile de Girardin, or look at La Presse once or twice a-week.

SIR CARIBERT OF THE LEAF.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

The old Marquis de Mont-Chery sat in his chair of state after a dinner in the great hall, on the fourth of May, in the year of grace one thousand five hundred and eighteen. Two gentlemen of his suite stood behind him motionless and silent. An aged lady, deep buried in velvet, and bearing on her head a pyramid of muslin, of which the apex nearly reached the beams of the celebrated roof, sat at his side. She might have passed for a piece of excellent workmanship in wax, if the artist had been able to give her a more natural and human expression; but, as it was, it was evident that she was only the Marchioness of Mont-Chery, mumbling a number of inarticulate prayers, and dropping the beads of her rosary. Near the table stood Father Aubert, bowed into the shape of a half-moon, the illuminated portion being represented by the bald head; and kneeling in front—one knee on a small footstool, and both his hands clasped in the old Marquis's shaking palms—was a young man of two-and-twenty years of age, handsome as a dream,—dark hair, broad shoulders, elegant limbs, and an eye—eyes, I should say, for he had two of them—so deep, so beautiful, so noble in their expression, that Phidias, Praxiteles, Titian—in fact, he would have made his fortune as a model for Adonis, or a young Apollo, in boots and riding hose. For the youth was evidently prepared for a journey. His spurs were long, his sword was heavy, the leathern bag he wore at his side bulged out into a perfect ball and gave evidence that he was well furnished with coin. In short, he was an accomplished cavalier, ready to fight his enemies or to pay his friends, and was on the eve of leaving his paternal halls to enter upon the world.

"Sir Caribert of the Leaf," said the old man, "Have you made your peace with the Church?"

"Forty masses for his repose, a thousand Ave Marias, and five hundred paternosters; a cottage to the widow, and place of undergroom to the eldest son," replied the young man. For a moment the Father raised his eyes and smiled approval. "And six wax candles to the shrine of Saint Boosè," he added, as if to satisfy the marquis's mind that the fault, whatever it was, was atoned for.

"But you shouldn't have killed the man," kindly replied the marquis. "Nay, I am not angry," he added, when he saw Sir Caribert about to speak; "if those people will come between us and the chace, it is right they should take the chance of what they merit. You are strong of arm, Sir Caribert of the Leaf, quick of eye, firm of heart. You are going to the court of France. Love the king—"

"And nobody else," said the marchioness, feebly. "There were bright eyes in the Palais des Tournelles when I was there, and winning smiles, and wicked laughs, and flowing beards, and such beautiful moustachios, which it was impossible to resist. I've missed a bead! Father Aubert, must I begin again?"

"Sir Caribert will not have so much difficulty as you experienced in resisting the beards and moustachios, Madame la Marquise," said the marquis, bitterly.

"There was the gay and clever Louise de Perigord," continued the lady, "the fairest maiden in the Marais, and her brother, the Chevalier de Latton, the best tilter in France. She sang the sweetest songs; and when he danced—I never saw such dancing. There! I've dropt again! Father Aubert, what's to be done? I shall never get through the mill."

"Your ladyship advises well," said the old man, though a little confused in the objects of her warning. "Win the king's favour."

"And nobody else's," again chimed in the marchioness. "Oh! that Duc de Mont-Guyon! I strove with all my might, Father Aubert; but he would have won the heart of an icicle. Such whispers! such looks! such sighs! If people will be so irresistible, is it any fault of mine?" Whereupon she passed three or four beads at a time.

"Go, then, Sir Caribert, my son," said the old marquis, with a look of pity towards his wife. "You are but the youngest of my house. I wish it had been otherwise, and that I had waited ten years before I married your mother. You would then have been my eldest child, and have borne the honour of my name; for the vicompte, as I remember, is exactly ten years your senior, and we might have calculated exactly. But, farewell! you will make a higher name than your brother's, and come back to us rich in fortune and fame." The old man bent forward and kissed the youth's brow.

"Me, too," said the mother, "kiss me, my Caribert. Beware of love, my son,—marry as I did, and it will trouble you no more. Ha! you stand before me like the Chevalier de Luson—no, like the Duc de Mont-Guyon.—I don't know who you are like; but you are very beautiful. Farewell!—and let us hear how you prosper in the great city of Paris. There, Father Caribert, I've dropt

my rosary altogether!—I knew I should never get through them all."

While Sir Caribert of the Leaf is pursuing his way towards the capital, mounted on his good steed—Rouge Dragon—and skirting the beautiful banks of the Loire, where his father's castle was situated, it chanced that, on this same cloudless fourth of May, two litters, sumptuously fitted up, were waiting in the court-yard of the great Château de Guernon on the Marne. Fifty men-at-arms, the guards of these litters, sat motionless on their horses, leaning on their spears, and waiting the approach of the two ladies whom they were to accompany to the court. In the hall Herminie d'Evreux was kneeling on the cushion before her father, who held her hands in his, and bestowed his blessing, which was sometimes interrupted by his tears.

"You are young, Herminie," he said, "and very timid. You are too bashful for a daughter of my house, and heiress of all my lands; but I would rather see the rose of modesty on a maiden's cheek than the flush of pride; or, what will never happen to my Herminie, the blush of shame. Take her, sister mine," he said, when the words of benediction were uttered, "take her, Duchess of Vaugrimant—be her guardian, her mother, her angel in the court, and bring her back to me as pure, as good, as loving as she is now. Herminie d'Evreux, remember that the honour of our house and the happiness of your father are both in your hands." Pale with emotion, trembling with fear, Herminie was on the point of sinking at her father's feet. But the Duchess of Vaugrimant stepped forward and put her arm round her waist, "Come daughter," she said, "niece no longer—trust to me. You have but one fault—but it is almost a virtue—you are too diffident, too subdued. Stand up, and quail not before king or noble! You have beauty enough to make you an empress; you have birth and ancestry enough to make you chief of the court. If you were old and charmless as I am—"

"Charmless? Oh, aunt! if I could curtsey as you do; oh, aunt! if I could speak, and sing, and walk, and threaten, and command; but I can do nothing—nothing but shake and tremble;—oh! might I stay at home!" But the father waved his hand; the duchess assisted the agitated girl across the great hall, and down the front steps, and into the litter, lined with such beautiful pink silk and ornamented with such a lovely window of real glass. Her favourite little dog was placed upon her knee—she kissed it as if for consolation; and the word was given for Paris. The cavalcade started off; and while Sir Caribert of the Leaf dismounted that night and sought the accommodation of a hostelry at Fontainbleau, the Duchess of Vaugrimant and her charming charge obtained the hospitality of the Seneschal of Conlammiers, and both parties crossed over to the Marais on the following day, at the same hour, and were received very graciously by his most Christian majesty the chivalrous Francis the First.

"By St. Denis's nostrils!" (they had curious oaths in those days;) said the king, "both knight and maiden were wise to keep out of Sir Caribert's way."

"If they wish to avoid having their toes trod on by a country lout," said the Compte de Saint Marceau, who, in the absence of the Fool, filled the office of merryman of the court.

"Maidens may do as they like," said the Vidame of Bugency. "I will not yield a step." He touched the handle of his sword as he spoke, and then twirled his moustache. He was the bully of the royal circle; and looked round with a threatening frown.

"Poor Chevalier de Mont-Chery!" said Francis, with a laugh. "I see two combats at least await him, one in repartee with Saint Marceau, and one with more dangerous arms with Bugency."

"It depends, your majesty, on which of us he encounters first," replied the duellist with a grin; "if he begins with me, Saint Marceau may spare his breath, unless to pronounce his funeral oration."

"But here he comes," said Francis, "fresh from the presence of the queen. Have you lost anything, Sir Caribert? You seem in search of something."

"Of his wit," suggested Saint Marceau in a whisper.

"Of his courage!" muttered Bugency, almost audibly.

"A dog, your majesty! a beautiful Italian greyhound belonging to one of the maids of honour. Has it, by good fortune, wandered into this hall?"

"Why should you think we should notice the foul animal you describe?" inquired Saint Marceau, laying a foundation for an extempore retort.

Sir Caribert eyed him, and saw a look of expectant triumph. The courtiers were listening for his answer.

"I thought you might study the dog, to learn how to take a whipping," said Sir Caribert, with a frown; "the lesson might be useful, and not long of being needed."

"You teach dogs manners, then?" interposed Bugency.

"Ay; puppies, too, when they require it." The king clapped his hands.

"The clown has beat the wit—the freshling has cowed the swordsman!"

"That is to be seen," said Bugency, with a smile. "Your name is, I believe, Sir Caribert of the Leaf. With his majesty's permission, I shall have great satisfaction in stripping your bough, and seeing whether you have greatest resemblance to the oak, or, as I guess from your trembling, to the aspen."

"If I tremble, 'tis with impatience to trample on a knave. There!"—with his glove, held lightly in his hand, he tapped the cheek of the astonished Bugency.

There was silence in the circle. Francis himself was taken by surprise.

"'Tis too late to interpose," he said.

Bugency made a deep bow to the king, and left the hall.

"You are master of your fence, I trust," said Francis, good-naturedly, to Sir Caribert. "'Tis a pity you quarrelled so soon; in a week you would have learned who your enemy is, and would have avoided him if you could—"

"Not so," replied the youth; "if I had known ten minutes ago, as now I know, that he is Bugency, the deftest sword-buckler in France, I should have spared my glove and marked his face with my hand. But the Lady Herminie," he added, "has lost her Venus, and is inconsolable; I must restore it to her arms before I prepare Bugency for his confessor—and when I have done both," he added, with a glance round the room, "I have still an account to settle with a jester, who seemed to challenge me to try my skill, but I see him not; great wits jump, we are told—they sometimes also run."

He left the hall in search of Herminie's greyhound.

"By Clovis's thumbs!" cried the king—(they had curious oaths, I repeat, in those days)—"this young kestrel will fly at high game if Bugency doesn't clip his wings. Meanwhile, gentlemen, get ready, for the duel will take place in the tilt-yard at three of the clock, and it is now half-past two."

"Is it to the death?" inquired the Bishop of Aigos Potamos, who lived a long way from his diocese.

The king made a motion with his head.

"I am sorry for it," said the bishop, "for if it had merely been a skirmish till bloodflow, I should like to have seen Bugency trounce this countryman."

"He'll do it at the third lunge—for twenty roubles!" cried Beauvillon.

"Done! not till the sixth; for the bumpkin is long in the arm and active in limb," replied Vascon de Bere, and took the bet.

"A golden goblet to-night at supper," cried the king, "to the lord who shall write the best epitaph on Sir Cuthbert of the Leaf—"

"'Tis mine, your majesty, already," said Leonard de la Fosse; "I thought of it while Bugency was making his bow.

> "Here lies Sir Caribert the vain,
> By quarrelsome Bugency slain;
> One wounded with his pointed word,
> And t'other with his pointed sword."

"Admirable! bravo! You shall have the cup," said Francis, enraptured.

"And a cap, too, my good fellow!" chimed in Saint Marceau, who had ventured to resume his place; "aye, and bells to it besides, and a pretty bauble in your hand, and a parti-coloured coat to your back, for Triboulet has not chance—"

"Hush! Saint Marceau," said De la Fosse, "there's Caribert coming; and who knows but he may be going to horsewhip you before he measures swords with Bugency?"

I have said they had curious oaths in those days; they had excellent wit, too, and a great deal of gentlemanly feeling.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"And Herminie?" said the jovial Francis, three months after this adventure; "has she recovered her spirits since the misadventure to her greyhound?"

"She disregards it entirely, your majesty," replied Etienne Fitzyonne; "nay, to show how little she values all the trouble taken for its recovery, it is supposed she has either hung it to an apple-tree in the orchard, by the ribbon of her waistband, or is starving it in some remote corner of her apartment. No one has seen it since it was so publicly restored by the happy man who found it."

"And out of compliment to his endeavours to please her," said the Chevalier des Ursins, "she keeps an English mastiff which tears down an ox when it wants a little refreshment, and has scattered dismay in the good city of Paris."

"A strange damsel, who will always have her way," said Charles de Beaupere, sententiously pursing his lips.

"Is that an extremely quiet, shy, modest young creature," inquired Philibert Baron de Nancy, "whom I met at your majesty's palace in the Marais last May, when that unfortunate business happened between Sir Caribert of the Leaf and—and—I forget the poor man's name—the swordsman—the challenger—the bravo—"

"Ha!" said Francis, putting his forefinger to his brow. "What was the poor man's name? He was disarmed at the first pass, and slain before we could count ten—I wish I could remember who it was."

All the courtiers put their forefingers to their brows and tried to remember the name of the unfortunate man.

"A silved-hilted dagger," cried the king, "to the man that tells me who it was that Sir Caribert of the Leaf exterminated the first day he came to court."

"It was Bugency, if it please you," observed the Vicompte de la Fosse. "I lost a silver flagon to your majesty for writing an epitaph on the wrong man."

"As you shall certainly lose a silver dagger if you give us the wrong name of the defunct," replied the king. "But there was another—the fellow that used to make us laugh—whom Sir Caribert silenced after the duel. By St. Genevieve's ankles!" (they had curious oaths, as I have said in those days) "I marvel our memory is so bad!"

"Saint Marceau you mean," suggested the Chatelain de Montcoucy. "He is now in the Convent of the Cordéliers of Tours—they say very holy—engaged in writing the loves of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. When Sir Caribert sent to him the sword, still reeking,

with which he had expedited Bugency, and on a silver salver, held by his page, a pair of beautiful steel scissors requesting the humourist to take his choice, Saint Marceau said his hair was already beginning to fall off, and he preferred being clipped to being killed. So he is the Reverend Friar Joseph—and if poems were miracles would be certain to be canonised."

"You are over-flippant, sir," said Francis, pulling a long countenance, "in talking of sacred things. The Bishop of Aigos Potamos —by the by, I hope your lordship's parishioners are well?—will put you to penance—"

"Of what sort?" inquired the offending noble, looking humbly towards the prelate.

"Why, he will make you listen to his sermons all through Lent," said Aloys de Chabannes.

"He will lend you his mule to ride when you are in a hurry to visit your lady," said Adrien de Cossé.

"He will make you play cards with him," said Hercule the young Duc de Mirecourt, showing an empty purse; "and keep the deal in his own hands—the Pope himself couldn't cheat more openly."

"Enough, my lords," said Francis, "remember we are the most Christian King—and, besides (in a low tone of voice) that his lordship of Aigos Potamos—I really hope that they have no dissent among them in that populous diocese—was so drunk last night, that he doesn't know what you are saying.—Draw swords!" he added, suddenly, "and stand on your guard! for here's Herminie D'Evreux and her companion of Satan, the demoniacal English dog. How remarkably like our brother Henry!"

A dog of the most preposterous ferocity of aspect now walked sulkily up the hall. It had a broad chest, strong legs, round head, sullen eyes, and wicked-looking ears. It had an expression of hunger in its watering mouth when it came near a gentleman's leg, most unsatisfactory for the proprietor of the leg to notice. And, altogether, it was so detestable an animal, so dangerous and untameable that the Bishop of Aigos Potamos had at once christened it Luther, who was at that time summoned to appear before the Diet of Augsburg. If the gentlemen of France had been the assembled princes and prelates, before whom he was to appear, Luther couldn't have displayed his teeth in a more menacing manner. However, he wouldn't have had the redeeming charm of having a blue ribband round his neck, attached at the other end to a waist, so slim, so graceful, so perfect in shape and proportion, that it was evident it could only belong to the beauty of the most beautiful Court of the world, the paragon of wits and graces; of strong minds and sharp tongues; the dashing, flashing, slashing Herminie D'Evreux, whom we saw receiving her father's blessing with so many tears, and her aunt's assistance with so much helplessness and shame. Oh! three months of the Marais had driven away the effects of seventeen years of the Marne. She had discarded her blushes and her litter, and rode forth an Amazonian queen, on steeds which the courtiers were afraid to ride. She had dismissed her country taste, her lute, her flowers, her books of devotion (beautifully emblazoned), and had taken up with rackets; and the high dance; and the songs of the Troubadours. In short, she had sent away her graceful, timid, little Italian greyhound, Venus, and taken to her heart the English mastiff Luther. At her side, walked, obedient, submissive, respectful, the acknowledged champion of the French nobility; the tallest, the strongest, the most skilful of the chivalry of that strong and chivalrous age, the Chevalier de Mont-Chery, commonly called Sir Caribert of the Leaf. If she looked, he obeyed her glance; if she spoke, he was all ear; and she was always looking and always speaking—his obedience was incessant and his ears getting very long. Courtships were tremendous operations at that time. The lover was happy if in ten years he was allowed to touch his mistress's glove; when he got possession of a tress it was generally getting grey; and she seldom smiled upon the most favoured of her adorers till she had lost a few of her teeth. And the hostility was immense. If the worshipper admired a riband, it was thrown into the fire—if he praised a song, it was sung no more—if, as in the case of which I am the veracious chronicler, a favourite lap-dog was restored, it was banished from her presence. It was, in fact, a long engagement, in the most military sense of the word, for the skirmishes were perpetual, and the animosity inappeasable. The lady moved up the Hall with the tread of an imperial goddess, curtsied to the royal Francis with a proud humility, which asserted the superiority of the crown of youth and loveliness she bore upon her brow to the golden ring which he had placed upon his head at Rheims; and announced that the Queen and twelve maids of honour would be ready at ten of the clock that night, to receive the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne, who would be admitted to the Temple of Apollo and entertained by Minerva (her majesty of France), attended by the nine Muses and the three Graces.

"Of which last the Athenian Pallas has chosen the loveliest for her messenger," replied the gallant Francis.

He advanced a step, but suddenly stopped short, as he felt the breath of the long-toothed German reformer upon his leg.

"If it were not for circumstances," he said, "over which we have no control, we should bestow the kiss of salutation on the cheek of the incomparable Agleia——that cursed dog! have we no knight or gentleman of our suite who will make an A'Becket of the brute?——But bear our message," he

continued, "that at the hour named the horn of Roncesvalles will be blown, and chivalry will pay its devoirs to intellect and beauty."

A haughty curtsey, of a deeper formality than ever, was Herminie's reply; and, pulling Luther away from sniffing in a most menacing manner the fat calves of the Bishop of Aigos Potamos, the most graceful and magnificent of the maidens of France slowly retired, attended as before by the silent observant, but altogether neglected Sir Caribert of the Leaf. And that night who was the most noisy?—who the most pert?—the most—O! must I say the word?—the most impudent of the damsels who were all noisy—all pert—all impudent? But on this occasion it was remarked that, for a moment, the attention of Sir Caribert of the Leaf, who was dressed like the young Roland, was paid to the Muse of History; for a moment his eyes wandered from the Grace Agleia and rested on the dark hair and sweet lips of Clio; nay, he laid aside his horn and danced a stately dance with the fair Duchess of Montmesnil, who wore a star upon her forehead, and a pen enwreathed in her tresses, and a volume (in pearls) upon the gorget of her satin robe, and was, in all things, a tableau vivant of one of the chapters of Herodotus. A beautiful Clio! and if all history was like HER—if the long-drawn platitudes of a Peninsular story could be irradiated by such charming sayings—if a dull folio could be so glorified by sparkling sentences—ah! who wouldn't be a student of the national annals, and prefer the dryest pages of Henry or Carte to the novels of Walter Scott or the plays of the divine Williams? The Grace Agleia might have been mistaken for her mythological sister Tisiphone, or her hideous cousin—many times removed—Medusa. Her glance fell upon Sir Caribert in the midst of a demi-volto. Was he turned to stone? Did he harden into lead? His limbs became rigid; a faint smile which had begun to make its appearance on his lips committed suicide, by burying itself alive in a frightful wrinkle which convulsed his cheek. He paused—he stood still; he turned slowly away, and left the Historic Muse in the middle of the floor, expectant of his escort to her seat. He placed himself silently behind the fauteuil on which the Grace Agleia was reclined. All night he listened for a whisper of forgiveness; it never came. All night he watched for a look of kindness; she never saw he was in the room. And, hopeless, broken-hearted, and dying of hunger, he left the apartment before the supper was announced, and retired to his chamber the most miserable of men. And for three days he did not make his appearance in the court. Francis was beginning to put his forefinger to his brow in order to recall his name; and Saint Marceau heard a rumour down among the Cordeliers that it might be safe to emerge from his monastery and ask the king for the abbey of Jerveaux the Joyous. And curiosity was excited. The Muse of History sent to pick up all the information she could; but, as always happens when she takes this trouble, the reports were dubious and confused. The Duchess of Vaugrimant—but evidently without the knowledge of her niece the Grace Agleia—asked if a confessor had yet been sent to the afflicted; and at length the pity of all the damsels in Paris was called forth, when it was stated by the court physician that some unexpected sorrow, or, more probably, a severe cold caught on the night of the entertainment had settled upon his throat, affected the nerves of his tongue, and that the gay and gallant Sir Caribert of the Leaf would inevitably be dumb for life!—be dumb in the midst of so much talk, without the power of adding a syllable to the stock!—be dumb with so many things left unsaid to the fair Herminie D'Evreux!—so many whispers still to be uttered as they paced along the galleries, or sat in the queen's boudoir while the maids worked at the tambour, and the knights had the opportunity of speaking without a chance of being overheard! Poor Caribert!—poor Chevalier de Mont-Chery! It was too true. His throat muscles were paralysed, and he could utter no sound—no, not even a sigh. His father, the old marquis, heard of the misfortune, and came up to Paris to condole with his son.

"Caribert, my child! Alas! this is the acme of my distress. Your brother the Vicompte has been stabbed in the low countries, by a Dutchman, who doesn't understand the politeness of the French nation, and rewarded him with a whole carving-knife of steel for a few delicate attentions to his bride. And you are my heir—my pride—my successor! And you are dumb!"

The old man's tears began to fall, and Sir Caribert's eyes were a fountain.

"Come with me," cried the old man. "Come back to our native Loire. Leave the noisy court; and, perhaps, in solitude, in happiness, your voice may return once more. You will be able to sing as of old in the château—to pray as of old in the church."

But Sir Caribert shook his head. He couldn't leave the scene of all his grief. He could not desist for an hour from watching the features and listening to the tones of Herminie. And how did she behave? She was cold and neglectful: she never pitied him for his sorrow—never smiled upon his long hours of interminable silence, but rattled gaily with all the wits of the time—herself the wittiest, the coldest, the most heartless of all the coquettes in Paris.

* * * * *

Is there a thaw sometimes in the Arctic sea? Do the glaciers of Mont Blanc sometimes melt? Has Herminie become touched with the misery of her lover? When nearly two years were passed, one night she put the blue ribbon of her waistband—a blue ribbon

not worth wishing for—into Sir Caribert's hand; and then he cast his sunken eye along its length in expectation of seeing the heretical countenance of the indomitable Luther: what was his delight to recognise the graceful form of the little Italian greyhound?—the trembling, pretty, active little Venus, which he remembered so well? A flush came to his cheek. For an instant he made an effort even to speak; but his force failed; an inarticulate moaning sound was all he could produce, and the proud beauty passed on, taking no further notice of his surprise.

"By the eleven thousand slippers of Saint Ursule and his friends," cried Francis, "the false minx repents of her cruel disdain!"

"Pardon, majesty," said an old friend, the bishop of Aigos Potamos, who was now elevated to the rank of Patriarch of Baugle-Cuddy (a very populous metropolis at the southern extremity of Abyssinia), "Pardon, majesty, there must have been twenty-two thousand slippers in the glorious company you mention—that is, if the amiable young ladies had two feet apiece."

"And a slipper for each foot," added the Vicompte de la Force, who had taken Saint Marceau's place as acknowledged humourist of the court.

"We are the most Christian king," said Francis, with dignity, "and not a shoemaker; but what we say is evident—the tyrant is beginning to relent; she will give him her hand ere long; she has given him the leading-string already."

"And seems converted from the guidance of Luther," said the patriarch; "so that an orthodox prelate may show his limbs without the chance of their being bitten by a rebellious monk."

"But how will Sir Caribert be able to make the responses?" inquired Ermengarde de Coulanges. She had acted the Muse of Comedy, and always smiled with her lips apart (to show her beautiful teeth).

"By a nod," replied the patriarch; "for I remember to have read in a book of divinity, that in the case of a blind horse—but to be sure, Sir Caribert is not a horse, nor is he blind—"

"You can say," suggested the Muse of Comedy, in answer to her own question, "a great many things by means of a smile."

"It shall not need," said Herminie herself, who had overheard the conversation. "The man I marry shall have the full use of his voice, or how shall I be able to obey his commands?"

"You obey?" inquired Francis, with a malicious emphasis on the word.

"Aye, with more absolute subjection, if possible, than my lover has shown to me."

"He has not disputed your orders; it all exists in words," said De la Force.

"He will scarcely obey them at all," chimed in the king, "if you don't keep the Duchess de Montmesnil out of his way. He is devoted to historical investigations."

"Particularly in dark and obscure places," added the wit.

Herminie looked at the silent Sir Caribert with a glow of tenderness in her expression, such as had never been seen in it before.

"Caribert," she said, "do you care for the Historic house?"

Sir Caribert shook his head in negation, and lifted Venus in his arms. He pressed the little dog to his breast.

"They don't know," she continued, "how you have shown your right to command by your having obeyed so well."

Sir Caribert looked with a flush of expectation.

"They fancied," she went on, "that I had lost my power over you, and that your heart wandered to the duchess. Did it wander, Caribert?"

Again the unfortunate man shook his head, and clasped Venus closer to his heart.

"They thought that I did not recognise your truth, your tenderness, your respect. They fancied I was blind to all your qualities, and that now that you are struck with so sad a visitation—with the loss of speech—that I leave you unpitied in your life of silence. Is it so, Sir Caribert de Montchery?"

Again a shake of the head repudiated so cruel a suspicion.

"And now," she said, "I have tried you, and found you perfect at every proof. I have found you loyal in a place where fidelity is unknown. I have found you disinterested in a place where selfishness is supreme. I have found you trustful where appearances might lead you to doubting love. My lord, sir! take it to your lips. Herminie d'Evreux is yours."

She looked round proudly while Sir Caribert, on his knee, covered her white hand with kisses.

"And the man is dumb!" said Francis, in a sad tone, "'tis pity you did not take compassion on him before."

"Are you dumb, Sir Caribert?" said Herminie. "Speak, dearest! Tell them it was to try your constancy I condemned you to the trial."

And Sir Caribert spoke; and the first word he said was "Wife."

THE NORTH AGAINST THE SOUTH.

Is it not the poet Wordsworth who tells us, that "the towns in Saturn are ill-built?" We know not, however, what authority he had for the assertion, apart from his own imagination. We may be sure that he would not, like a prosaic Swedenborg, have pretended to a special revelation, or spiritual visit, for his instruction on that specific topic. An elder poet, accepted by Wordsworth as a model, has described the sides

of the north as the stronghold and fortress—the Sebastopol, so to speak—of the Powers of Evil. Milton, perhaps, had some kind of authority in certain symbolic phrases of an ancient prophet. History, moreover, speaks of the north with an amount of irreverence that betokens a long and deep-seated prejudice. To Homer, the countries beyond the Haemus were regions of darkness, subject to the unmitigated rule of the rugged Boreas. And it is true that the arid tablelands, the steppes, and the forests, of the north, condemn man to a pastoral and hunting life, and render him nomadic and barbarous. Nor, in his barbarian state, has he remained passive or forbearing, but has continually acted on the more civilised man of the south with impetuous self-determination. Multitudes of savage peoples have issued from the borders of the north; and, like their own boisterous torrents and icy winds, have done the work of sudden tempests and destructive billows to the nations of the south. It has even been surmised that the belief in two principles —one good and one evil—among the followers of Zoroaster, and the ancient people of Zend, was originally derived from the repeated conflicts between Iran and Turan; that is, between the good genius of the south or of light and civilisation, and the evil genius of the north or of darkness and barbarism. Upon the plateau of Iran, full six centuries before the Christian era, the Scythians swept with the violence of the whirlwind through the gate of the Khorasan; and, after overrunning the flourishing kingdom of Media, spread themselves as far as Egypt. Also, in the eleventh century of our own era, the Seldjouks or Turks, from the heights of Bolor and Turkestan, contrived to lord it over western Asia, after invading eastern Persia, overturning the power of the Gaznevide sultans, and finishing off that of the caliphs. Then, there is the invasion of the whole of Asia by the Mongolians under Gengis-Khan; Russia subjected; Germany resisted; and Europe generally menaced. The conquerors of China, too, come from the north; and the history of that country teems with instances of the conflicts between that people and the Manchou Tartars, who became its rulers. Nor must we forget the Mongolian empire in India, which so long opposed its power to our own.

There have not been wanting theorists who have recognised in the apparently constant opposition of the north and south a kind of natural law, by which both are destined to be regulated, and to which the whole of history may be made to bear witness. They point to the Kelts migrating to Gaul, led by Bellovese and Sigovese, and establishing themselves in the smiling plains of the Po—soon to be followed by other bands, who founded a new Gaul beyond the Alps. Twice these roving hordes assailed infant Rome; and, having pillaged Greece, were in turn assailed by Rome in her maturity, and thereby won to civilisation. Still the mistress of the world continued to be in danger from the children of the north; and Rome herself fell at length before their repeated assaults.

This interpenetration of the south and north—this yielding of the more civilised to the barbarian power—is to be historically regarded as having been appointed for the interest of humanity. It was needed that the fresh vitality of the northmen should, like new sap, circulate through the old and enfeebled empires; while in modern Europe the continued struggle of physical and intellectual energy ended in the better culture of both worlds. Conquerors and conquered—the civilised and the barbarous—alike melted down into one and the same people, and rose to a far superior civilisation, uniting the free and intelligent thinker of the north with the artistic and impassioned superstitionist of the south.

Writers who are disposed to the fullest recognition of the law at which we have above hinted, remark, that both in Asia and in Europe there alike exist both a northern and a southern world. The fields of Lombardy answer to the tropical plains of India; the Alps to the Himalaya; and the plateaus of Bavaria to those of Tibet. The contrasts are varied and numerous. Thus, the tableland of the south is broken up into peninsulas and islands: Greece and its archipelago, Italy and its isles, Spain and its sierras, are all individualised. For, in Europe, it is on the peninsulas and the margin of the seas that civilisation first shows itself; while in Asia civilisation commenced in the great plains and on the banks of rivers. In the latter, however, it had its cradle; but in the former, having overcome its early difficulties, it grows and prospers with unprecedented vigour. America, indeed, presents a third northern continent, but under a different aspect. It is, says a French traveller, evidently constructed, "not to give birth and growth to a new civilisation, but to receive one ready made, and to furnish forth for man, whose education the Old World has completed, the most magnificent theatre, the scene most worthy of his activity."

Such speculations as these are pregnant with utility, because they are infinitely suggestive. They give the mind a fillip, and an impetus, and set it going with immense rapidity and energy. The analogy between the New World and the Old that exists in regard to the relations of these opposite points of the compass is at least remarkable. In North America, we behold again the people of North Europe, the Anglo-Saxons, the Germans, and the French—in South America, the Spanish and the Portuguese. The contrasts of the Old are reproduced in the New World, more strongly marked, and on a grander scale. They are illustrated by those between North America, with its temperate

climate, its protestant and progressive people, and South America, with its tropical climate, its catholic and stationary population.

It is not our intention to travel through the various theories connected with this curious subject, but our wish is simply to stimulate the mind of the more studious of our readers, by a few familiar suggestions, to further investigation. Perhaps, we may wish also to relieve the much-abused North of some portion of its bad character, and make a moral application of these few physical observations.

It is plain that the man of the North commences the game of life under various disadvantages—the severity of the climate, and the barrenness of the soil; but these disadvantages are, after all, the conditions of his future excellence. Wisely, it was ordered by Providence that the cradle of mankind should be placed, not at the centre of the tropical regions, but among the continents of the north. The latter by their forms, their structure, and their climate, are calculated for the development of individuals and societies; the former by their balmy, but enervating and treacherous atmosphere, might have lulled man into a death sleep, even in his infancy. For, as it has been remarked by one of the authors to whom we have referred—"The man of the tropical regions is the son of a wealthy house. In the midst of the surrounding abundance, labour too often seems to him useless. To abandon himself to his inclinations is a more easy and agreeable pastime. A slave to his passions, an unfaithful servant, he leaves uncultivated and unused the faculties with which God has endowed him. The work of improvement is with him a failure. On the other hand, the man of the polar regions is the beggar, overwhelmed with suffering, who, too happy if he but gain his daily bread, has no leisure to think of anything more exalted. But the man born of the temperate regions is the man born in ease, in the golden mean, which is the most favoured of all conditions. Invited to labour by everything around him, he soon finds, in the exercise of all his faculties, at once progress and well-being." On the contrary, the man of the North must work to live; he must cultivate, with unceasing labour, an untractable soil; he must constantly contend against an inhospitable climate; he must acquire and exercise forecast, self-denial, and caution; storing up in one season what will be required for another; denying himself necessaries or luxuries when they can be had, to save himself from hunger and cold when they cannot be had; and he must be ever upon the watch against his enemies among the lower animals, whose hunger is greater, and whose vigilance may be as great as his.

Such a subject as the present is peculiarly susceptible of what the clergy call improvement. There is, in fact, a moral as well as a physical north and south. There are states of society, even in temperate climates, which are as trying to human virtue as the frozen regions, where man has to contend with the severity of his position, and life is but a struggle with death; where extremest labour can only save the individual from perishing by hunger and want of shelter. But these evils stimulate to exertion: and it is from the classes thus situated that the more favoured ranks of society get replenished with their most active members. The men who succeed best in the world are the more enterprising exiles of the neglected orders, who win a better position for themselves in a state of society to which they were not born; and who, while they receive a certain degree of polish from that state, bring to it a proportionate amount of vigour by which it is strengthened as an institution. The Scot and the Yorkshireman become modified by their stay in the place of their migration and adoption, and in turn modify by their example, the neighbourhood which watches their steady earnestness and their economical perseverance. The system of English society and the scheme of our polity, willingly admit of these irruptions, and gives a warm welcome to worth, as it travels through the various degrees of endeavour, as it strives to reach the highest point of its special ambition. There is something, then, to be undoubtedly thankful for in those hard conditions of life that promote fortitude, when they lead to results such as we have described. We have now in our mind's eye several individuals of our acquaintance whose early training was decidedly in the moral north of our social hemisphere; but who are now living in all the luxuries of the moral south, and who, probably, if they had been born under the more enervating latitudes, would have missed the good fortune as under a different dispensation of their lot they have now gained.

Let us, therefore, learn to surrender some of our prejudices against the barbarous North, and at least confess that out of its evils sometimes may come good. If we are more favourably situated, it will do us no harm to stand upon our guard, lest the enervating conditions of our better destiny render us incapable of maintaining our position against the competition of more robust aspirants, and carefully to cultivate the habits needful for self-defence. We shall do well to take example from the hardy sons of the North, and practically confess that they have something to teach us which for our own benefit we are willing to learn.

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TO THINK, OR BE THOUGHT FOR?

SOME weeks since, there appeared in the Times newspaper two letters referring to the recent purchase for the National Gallery of a picture by the old Venetian painter Bellini. The letters were signed by gentlemen well known as connoisseurs and critics in the world of Art; the name of the one being Mr. William Coningham, and the name of the other Doctor Waagen. Mr. Coningham wrote to inform the public, as the result of his critical knowledge of painting, that the Bellini had been "daubed over,"—that it was, "for educational purposes, utterly worthless,"—and that the nation had been cruelly imposed on in buying it. Doctor Waagen wrote (not with overstrained politeness) to inform the public, as the result of his critical knowledge of painting, that the picture was "decidedly genuine,"—that it "surpassed every example of the subject that he had hitherto seen by the master,"—and that the nation was unspeakably fortunate in having secured such a treasure. Mr. Coningham rejoined by recommending all persons interested in the discussion to go and judge for themselves which was in the right, Dr. Waagen or himself. And there, so far as the writer of these lines knows, the matter ended.

It may, perhaps, tend to reassure all readers not deeply interested in discussing the last debateable purchase for the National Gallery, if I state, at the outset, that I have no intention of entering into the controversy described above. I have only alluded to it because I think it affords a practical example of what a singularly conventional thing the question of the value or worthlessness of a picture by an old master has become in our day. Here are two critics on art, notorious, on many past occasions, for discoursing learnedly and authoritatively on painting, both writing of the same picture, and both arriving at diametrically opposite conclusions respecting it. Surely, if nothing else will awaken the public mind from its indolent and hopeless dependence on arbitrary rules and critical opinions in matters of Art, the plain inference to which this remarkable controversy leads ought to supply the necessary stimulant. Surely the bewildered visitor to the National Gallery, standing opposite the Bellini, with Doctor Waagen on his right hand begging him to admire it, and Mr. Coningham on his left entreating him to despise it, must end, in mere self-defence, in shaking both the critical gentlemen off, and judging for himself, not of the Bellini only, but of every other picture in the collection as well. If anything I can say here will help, in the smallest degree, towards encouraging intelligent people of any rank to turn a deaf ear to everything that critics, connoisseurs, lecturers, and compilers of guide-books can say to them, to trust entirely to their own common sense when they are looking at pictures, and to express their opinions boldly, without the slightest reference to any precedents whatever, I shall have exactly achieved the object with which I now apply myself to the writing of this paper.

Setting aside, then, all further reference to particular squabbles about particular pictures, let me now ask in regard to pictures in general, what it is that prevents the public from judging for themselves, and why the influence of Art in England is still limited to select circles,—still unfelt, as the phrase is, by all but the cultivated classes? Why do people want to look at their guide-books, before they can make up their minds about an old picture? Why do they ask connoisseurs and professional friends for a marked catalogue before they venture inside the walls of the exhibition-rooms in Trafalgar Square? Why, when they are, for the most part, always ready to tell each other unreservedly what books they like, or what musical compositions are favourites with them, do they hesitate the moment pictures turn up as a topic of conversation, and intrench themselves doubtfully behind such cautious phrases, as, "I don't pretend to understand the subject,"—"I believe such and such a picture is much admired,"—"I am no judge," and so on? No judge! Does a really good picture want you to be a judge? Does it want you to have anything but eyes in your head, and the undisturbed possession of your senses? Is there any other branch of intellectual art which has such a direct appeal, by the very nature of it, to every sane human being as the art of painting? There it is, able to represent through a medium which offers itself to you palpably

and immediately, in the shape of so many visible feet of canvass, actual human facts, and distinct aspects of Nature, which poetry can only describe, and which music can but obscurely hint at. The Art which can do this, and which has done it over and over again both in past and present times, is surely of all arts that one which least requires a course of critical training before it can be approached on familiar terms. Whenever I see an intelligent man, which I often do, standing before a really eloquent and true picture, and asking his marked catalogue, or his newspaper, or his guide-book, whether he may safely admire it or not, I think of a man standing winking both eyes in the full glare of a cloudless August noon, and inquiring deferentially of an astronomical friend whether he is really justified in saying that the sun shines!

But, we have not yet fairly got at the main obstacle which hinders the public from judging of pictures for themselves, and which, by a natural consequence, limits the influence of Art on the nation generally. For my own part, I have long thought and shall always continue to believe, that this same obstacle is nothing more or less than the Cant of Criticism, which has got obstructively between Art and the people,—which has kept them asunder, and will keep them asunder until it is fairly pulled out of the way, and set aside at once and for ever in its proper background place.

This is a bold thing to say; but I think I can advance some proofs that my assertion is not altogether so wild as it may appear at first sight. By the Cant of Criticism, I desire to express, in one word, the conventional laws and formulas, the authoritative rules and regulations which individual men set up to guide the tastes and influence the opinions of their fellow-creatures. When Criticism does not speak in too arbitrary a language, and when the laws it makes are ratified by the consent and approbation of the intelligent public in general, I have as much respect for it as anyone. But, when Criticism sits altogether apart, speaks opinions that find no answering echo in the general heart, and measures the greatness of intellectual work by anything rather than by its power of appealing to all capacities for admiration and enjoyment, from the very highest to the very humblest,—then, as it seems to me, Criticism becomes Cant and forfeits all claim to consideration and respect. It then becomes the kind of criticism which I call Obstructive, and which has, I think, set itself up fatally between the Art of Painting and the honest and general appreciation of that Art by the People.

Let me try to make this still clearer by an example. A great deal of obstructive criticism undoubtedly continues to hang as closely as it can about Poetry and Music. But there are, nevertheless, stateable instances, in relation to these two Arts, of the voice of the critic and the voice of the people being on the same side. The tragedy of Hamlet, for example, is critically considered to be the masterpiece of dramatic poetry; and the tragedy of Hamlet is also, according to the testimony of every sort of manager, the play, of all others, which can be invariably depended on to fill a theatre with the greatest certainty, act it when and how you will. Again, in music, the Don Giovanni of Mozart, which is the admiration even of the direst pedant producible from the ranks of musical connoisseurs, is also the irresistible popular attraction which is always sure to fill the pit and gallery at the opera. Here, at any rate, are two instances in which two great achievements of the past in poetry and music are alike viewed with admiration by the man who appreciates by instinct, and the man who appreciates by reason and rule.

If we apply the same test to the achievements of the past in Painting, where shall we find a similar instance of genuine concurrence between the few who are appointed to teach, and the many who are expected to learn? I put myself in the position of a man of fair capacity and average education, who labours under the fatal delusion that he will be helped to a sincere appreciation of the works of the Old Masters by asking critics and connoisseurs to form his opinions for him. I am sent to Italy as a matter of course. A general chorus of learned authorities tells me that Michael Angelo and Raphael are the two greatest painters that ever lived; and that the two recognised masterpieces of the highest High Art are the Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel, and the Transfiguration, in the Vatican. It is not only Lanzi and Vasari, and hosts of later sages running smoothly after those two along the same critical grooves, who give me this information. Even the greatest of English portrait-painters, the true and tender-hearted gentleman, Sir Joshua Reynolds, sings steadily with the critical chorus, note for note. When experience has made me wiser, I am able to detect clearly enough in the main principles which Reynolds has adopted in his Lectures on Art, the reason of his notorious want of success whenever he tried to rise above portraits to the regions of historical painting. But at the period of my innocence, I am simply puzzled and amazed, when I come to such a passage as the following in Sir Joshua's famous Fifth Lecture, where he sums up the comparative merits of Michael Angelo and Raphael:

> If we put these great artists in a line of comparison with each other, (lectures Sir Joshua), Raphael had more taste and fancy, Michael Angelo more genius and imagination. The one excelled in beauty, the other in energy. Michael Angelo had more of the poetical inspiration; his ideas are vast and sublime; his people are a superior order of beings; there is nothing about them, nothing in the air of their actions or their

attitudes, or the style and cast of their limbs or features, that reminds us of their belonging to our own species.

Here I get plainly enough at what Sir Joshua considers to be the crowning excellence of high art. It is one great proof of the poetry and sublimity of Michael Angelo's pictures that the people represented in them never remind us of our own species: which seems equivalent to saying that the representation of a man made in the image of Michael Angelo is a grander sight than the representation of a man made in the image of God. I am a little staggered by these principles of criticism; but as all the learned authorities that I can get at seem to have adopted them, I do my best to follow the example of my teachers, and set off reverently for Rome to see the two works of art which my critical masters tell me are the sublimest pictures that the world has yet beheld.

I go first to the Sistine Chapel; and, on a great blue-coloured wall at one end of it, I see painted a confusion of naked, knotty-bodied figures, sprawling up or tumbling down below a single figure, posted aloft in the middle, and apparently threatening the rest with his hand. If I ask Lanzi, or Vasari, or Sir Joshua Reynolds, or the gentleman who has compiled Murray's Hand-Book for Central Italy, or any other competent authorities, what this grotesquely startling piece of painter's work can possibly be, I am answered that it is actually intended to represent the unimaginably awful spectacle of the Last Judgment! And I am further informed that, estimated by the critical tests applied to it by these said competent authorities, the picture is pronounced to be a master-piece of grandeur and sublimity. I can see neither the one nor the other in it—but then the criterion of grandeur and sublimity in Art, adopted by the competent authorities, is altogether beyond my comprehension. As a last resource, I resolve to look a little closer at this celebrated work, and to try if I can get at any fair estimate of it by employing such plain, straightforward, uncritical tests, as will do for me and for everybody.

Here is a fresco, which aspires to represent the most impressive of all Christian subjects; it is painted on the wall of a Christian church, by a man belonging to a Christian community—what evidences of religious feeling has it to show me? I look at the lower part of the composition first, and see—a combination of the orthodox nursery notion of the devil with the Heathen idea of the conveyance to the infernal regions, in the shape of a horned and tailed ferryman giving condemned souls a cast across a river!

Let me try and discover next what evidences of extraordinary intellectual ability the picture presents. I look up towards the top now, by way of a change, and I find Michael Angelo's conception of the entrance of a martyr into the kingdom of Heaven, displayed before me in the shape of a flayed man, presenting his own skin, as a sort of credential, to the hideous figure with the threatening hand—which I will not, even in writing, identify with the name of Our Saviour. Elsewhere, I see nothing but unnatural distortion and hopeless confusion; fighting figures, tearing figures, tumbling figures, kicking figures; and, to crown all, a caricatured portrait, with a pair of ass's ears, of a certain Messer Biagio of Sienna, who had the sense and courage, when the Last Judgment was first shown on completion, to protest against every figure in it being painted stark-naked!

I see such things as these, and many more equally preposterous, which it is not worth while to mention. All other people with eyes in their heads see them, too. They are actual matters of fact, not debateable matters of taste. But I am not—on that account—justified, nor is any other uncritical person justified, in saying a word against the picture. It may palpably outrage all the religious proprieties of the subject; but, then, it is full of "fine foreshortening," and therefore we uncritical people must hold our tongues. It may violate just as plainly all the intellectual proprieties, counting from the flayed man with his skin in his hand, at the top, to Messer Biagio of Sienna with his ass's ears, at the bottom; but, then, it exhibits "masterly anatomical detail," and therefore we uncritical spectators must hold our tongues. It may strike us forcibly that, if people are to be painted at all, as in this picture, rising out of their graves in their own bodies as they lived, it is surely important (to say nothing of giving them the benefit of the shrouds in which they were buried) to represent them as having the usual general proportions of human beings. But Sir Joshua Reynolds interposes critically, and tells us the figures on the wall and ceiling of the Sistine Chapel are sublime, because they don't remind us of our own species. Why should they not remind us of our own species? Because they are prophets, sibyls, and such like, cries the chorus of critics indignantly. And what then? If I had been on intimate terms with Jeremiah, or if I had been the ancient king to whom the sibyl brought the mysterious books, would not my friend in the one case, and the messenger in the other, have appeared before me bearing the ordinary proportions and exhibiting the usual appearance of my own species? Does not Sacred History inform me that the prophet was a Man, and does not Profane History describe the sibyl as an Old Woman? Is old age never venerable and striking in real life?—But I am uttering heresies. I am mutinously summoning reason and common sense to help me in estimating an Old Master. This will never do: I had better follow the example of all the travellers I see about me, by turning away in despair, and leaving the Last Judgment to the critics and connoisseurs.

Having thus discovered that one master-piece of High Art does not address itself to me, and to the large majority whom I represent, let me go next to the Vatican, and see how the second master-piece (the Transfiguration, by Raphael,) can vindicate its magnificent reputation among critics and connoisseurs. This picture I approach under the advantage of knowing, beforehand, that I must make certain allowances for minor defects in it, which are recognised even by the learned authorities themselves. I am indeed prepared to be disappointed, at the outset, because I have been prepared by an artist friend to make allowances:

First, for defects of colour, which spoil the general effect of the picture on the spectator; all the lights being lividly tinged with green, and all the shadows being grimly hardened with black. This mischief is said to have been worked by the tricks of French cleaners and restorers, who have so fatally tampered with the whole surface, that Raphael's original colouring must be given up as lost. Rather a considerable loss, this, to begin with; but not Raphael's fault. Therefore, let it by no means depreciate the picture in my estimation.

Secondly, I have to make allowances for the introduction of two Roman Catholic Saints (St. Julian and St. Lawrence), represented by the painter as being actually present at the Transfiguration, in order to please Cardinal de' Medici, for whom the picture was painted. This *is* Raphael's fault. This sets him forth in the rather anomalous character of a great painter with no respect for his art. I have some doubts about him, after that,—doubts which my critical friends might possibly share if Raphael were only a modern painter.

Thirdly, I have to make allowances for the scene of the Transfiguration on the high mountain, and the scene of the inability of the disciples to cure the boy possessed with a devil, being represented, without the slightest division, one at the top and the other at the bottom of the same canvas,—both events thus appearing to be connected by happening in the same place within view of each other, when we know very well that they were only connected by happening at the same time. Also, when I see some of the disciples painted in the act of pointing up to the Transfiguration, the mountain itself being the background against which they stand, I am to remember (though the whole of the rest of the picture is most absolutely and unflinchingly literal in treatment) that here Raphael has suddenly broken out into allegory, and desires to indicate by the pointing hands of the disciples that it is the duty of the afflicted to look to Heaven for relief in their calamities. Having made all these rather important allowances, I may now look impartially at the upper half of this famous composition.

I find myself looking away again very soon indeed. It may be that three figures clothed in gracefully fluttering drapery, and dancing at symmetrically exact distances from each other in the air, represent such an unearthly spectacle as that of the Transfiguration to the satisfaction of great judges of art. I can also imagine that some few select persons may be able to look at the top of the high mountain, as represented in the picture, without feeling their gravity in the smallest degree endangered by seeing that the ugly knob of ground on which the disciples are lying prostrate, is barely big enough to hold them, and most certainly would not hold them if they all moved briskly on it together. These things are matters of taste, on which I have the misfortune to differ with the connoisseurs. Not feeling bold enough to venture on defending myself against the masters who are teaching me to appreciate High Art, I can only look away from the upper part of the picture as quickly as possible, and try if I can derive any useful or pleasant impressions from the lower half of the composition, in which no supernatural event is depicted, and which it is therefore perfectly justifiable to judge by referring it to the standard of dramatic truth, or, in one word, of Nature. As for this portion of the picture, I can hardly believe my eyes when I first look at it. Excepting the convulsed face of the boy, and a certain hard eagerness in the look of the man who is holding him, all the other faces display a stony inexpressiveness, which, when I think of the great name of Raphael in connection with what I see, fairly amazes me. I look down incredulously at my guide-book. Yes! there is indeed the critical authority of Lanzi quoted for my benefit. Lanzi tells me in plain terms that I behold represented in the picture before me "the most pathetic story Raphael ever conceived," and refers, in proof of it, to the "compassion evinced by the apostles." I look attentively at them all, and behold an assembly of hard-featured, bearded men, standing, sitting, and gesticulating, in conventional academic attitudes; their faces not expressing naturally, not even affecting to express artificially, compassion for the suffering boy, humility at their own incapability to relieve him, or any other human emotion likely to be suggested by the situation in which they are placed. I find it still more dismaying to look next at the figure of a brawny woman, with her back to the spectator, entreating the help of the apostles theatrically on one knee, with her insensible classical profile turned in one direction, and both her muscular arms stretched out in the other; it is still more dismaying to look at such a figure as this, and then to be gravely told by Lanzi that it exhibits "the affliction of a beautiful and interesting female." I observe, on entering the room in which the Transfiguration is placed, as I have previously observed on

entering the Sistine Chapel, groups of intelligent people before the picture consulting their guide-books—looking attentively at the work of High Art which they are ordered to admire—trying hard to admire it—then, with dismay in their faces, looking round at each other, shutting up their books, and retreating from High Art in despair. I observe these groups for a little while, and I end in following their example. We members of the general public may admire Hamlet and Don Giovanni, honestly, along with the critics, but the two sublimest pictures (according to the learned authorities) which the world has yet beheld, appeal to none of us; and we leave them, altogether discouraged on the subject of Art for the future. From that time forth we look at pictures with a fatal self-distrust. Some of us recklessly take our opinions from others; some of us cautiously keep our own opinions to ourselves; and some of us indolently abstain from having anything to do with an opinion at all.

Is this exaggerated? Have I misrepresented facts in the example I have quoted of obstructive criticism on Art, and of its discouraging effects on the public mind? Let the doubting reader, by all means, judge for himself. Let him refer to any recognised authority he pleases, and he will find that the two pictures of which I have been writing are critically and officially considered, to this day, as the two masterworks of the highest school of painting. Having ascertained that, let him next, if possible, procure a sight of some print or small copy from any part of either picture (there is a copy of the whole of the Transfiguration in the Gallery at the Crystal Palace), and practically test the truth of what I have said. Or, in the event of his not choosing to take that trouble, let him ask any unprofessional and uncritical friend who has seen the pictures themselves—and the more intelligent and unprejudiced that friend, the better for my purpose—what the effect on him was of The Last Judgment, or The Transfiguration. If I can only be assured of the sincerity of the witness, I shall not be afraid of the result of the examination.

Other readers who have visited the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican can testify for themselves (but, few of them will—I know them!) whether I have misrepresented their impressions or not. To that part of my audience I have nothing to say, except that I beg them not to believe that I am a heretic in relation to all works by all old masters, because I have spoken out about the Last Judgment and the Transfiguration. I am not blind, I hope, to the merits of any picture, provided it will bear honest investigation on uncritical principles. I have seen such exceptional works by ones and twos, amid many hundreds of utterly worthless canvasses with undeservedly famous names attached to them, in Italy and elsewhere. My valet de place has not pointed them out to me; my guide-book, which criticises according to authority, has not recommended me to look at them, except in very rare cases indeed. I discovered them for myself, and others may discover them as readily as I did, if they will only take their minds out of leading-strings when they enter a gallery, and challenge a picture boldly to do its duty by explaining its own merits to them without the assistance of an interpreter. If I give that simple receipt for the finding out and enjoying of good pictures, I need give no more. It is no part of my object to attempt to impose my own tastes and preferences on others. I want—if I may be allowed, to repeat my motives once more in the plainest terms—to do all I can to shake the influence of authority in matters of Art, because I see that authority standing drearily and persistently aloof from all popular sympathy; because I see it keeping pictures and the people apart; because I find it setting up as masterpieces, two of the worst of many palpably bad and barbarous works of past times; and lastly, because I find it purchasing pictures for the National Gallery of England, for which, in nine cases out of ten, the nation has no concern or care, which have no merits but technical merits, and which have not the last and lowest recommendation of winning general approval even among the critics and connoisseurs themselves. The controversy described at the beginning of this article is, as all readers of the public journals know, not the only controversy that has arisen of late years, when Old Masters have been added to the gallery, or, in other words, when the national picture-money has been spent for the confusion of the nation.

And what remedy against this? I say at the end, as I said at the beginning, the remedy is to judge for ourselves, and to express our opinions, privately and publicly, on every possible occasion, without hesitation, without compromise, without reference to any precedents whatever. Public opinion has had its victories in other matters, and may yet have its victory in matters of Art. We, the people, have a gallery that is called ours; let us do our best to have it filled for the future with pictures (no matter when or by whom painted), that we can get some honest enjoyment and benefit from. Let us, in Parliament and out of it, before dinner and after dinner, in the presence of big-wigs just as coolly as out of the presence of big-wigs, say plainly once for all that the sort of High Art which is professedly bought *for us*, and which does actually address itself to nobody but painters, critics, and connoisseurs, is not High Art at all, but the lowest of the Low: because it is the narrowest as to its sphere of action, and the most scantily furnished as to its means of doing good. We shall shock the connoisseurs (especially the elderly ones)

dreadfully by taking this course; we shall get indignantly reprimanded by the critics, and flatly contradicted by the lecturers; but we shall also, sooner or later, get a collection of pictures bought for us that we, mere mankind, can appreciate and understand. It may be a revolutionary sentiment, but I think that the carrying out of this reform (as well as of a few others) is a part of the national business which the people of England have got to do for themselves, and in which no big-wig whomsoever will assist them. There is a great deal of social litter accumulating about us; suppose, when we start the business of setting things to rights, that we try the new broom gently at first, by sweeping away a little High Art, and having the temerity to form our own opinions?

MR. SPECKLES ON HIMSELF.

Hereafter, men will tell each other of three poets in a single nation — Shakspeare, Milton, and Speckles: to make the third of whom Nature had joined the other two. This is a junction in the line of poetry not recognised at present. That which is Not-I does not understand me, but I understand myself. It may be said, too, that—while four of my six epics are still in manuscript, while two hundred of my tragedies are not only unacted, but also unpublished, and I have issued not more than thirty volumes of my lyric verse—the materials for an estimate of my poetical genius are not yet fully laid before the country. Posterity will, I am convinced, do me justice. Speckles, whose daily diet is humble-pie, has had more than a flask of water from the springs of Helicon. It saturates his soul.

It is not only in metaphysics and in poetry that I have proved my strength. I have made in vain some of the greatest mechanical discoveries of the present age. I have planned how to send huge steamers across the Atlantic, sped by a motive power of the simplest kind—a single hen. Instead of the thirty, fifty, or a hundred horses, whose power is commonly applied to engines, and the mules used by some spinners, I am able to show how wheels may be adjusted capable of being set into motion by a hen of ordinary strength. As hens, who are tough of muscle, would be preferred for this service, there would be none left but tender chickens for the dinner-table; and, on this fact I shall rely, whenever I bring out my plan, for a great deal of popular support. A hen-coop and a bushel of corn will box and feed my engine power. In me, gentlemen, you recover a Watt, a Milton, and a Bacon; but unluckily, the Watt, Milton, and Bacon, of the twentieth century. By a mistake I have appeared in the nineteenth, and it is only for that reason that I am not fully appreciated.

There are people who say they wish me well; but who say also, that it would be absurd to expect from me a connected narrative, for that I should exalt and be-praise myself till doomsday if I were not stopped. But I appeal to an enlightened public. How can I tell you anything if I know nothing, and how can I know anything if I am blind to my own character. Do you know what the absolute in cognition is? "Object plus subject is the absolute in cognition; matter mecum is the absolute in cognition; thoughts or mental states, together with the self or subject, are the absolute in cognition." I do not say this of myself, but have it from a distinguished professor.

How, then, do I know that there ever was such a man as my uncle Badham, the chemist? He may have existed only in my mind as the idea of a rich uncle who was more desperately offended than anybody, at my having been born a boy; but who nevertheless stood my godfather and my friend. After him I was christened Badham Speckles, and to him, at the age of fourteen, I was apprenticed. I was more certain of the existence of six tragedies and a farce which I had written at that time, than of the existence of my uncle, at whose table I sat, and in whose bed I slept, and at whose counter I served. The tragedies I had created. They were substantive portions of myself; (but Uncle Badham, if Berkeley Bishop of Cloyne was right; as I took him then to be) may have been a phantom —an idea of mine. His beef and potatoes were also ideas, good ideas; his rhubarb and bitter aloes, his pestle and mortar, scammony and Castile soap were bad ideas. Rochester —where we seemed to live—was built out of my own ideas, and peopled by creatures of my own. Hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, feeling, as everybody knows, is quite inadequate to prove the existence of anything or any body, except only oneself.

Yet the phantoms moving in that dream-figure, the world, complained of me sometimes, for being dreamy. I, a Speckles, a direct descendant, as the slight corruption of the family name proves, from the great Sophocles—myself the then author of six tragedies—was contemned even by the nursemaids of Rochester, who came to me for dill-water and castor-oil. I had a little printing-press, which I kept under my bed; and, by the help of which, I printed many of my own fugitive pieces upon fragments of shop-paper. Many a mixture did I send out folded in immortal verse. My uncle's customers found stanzas in powder-papers, mottoes in bottle caps, poetry even in blisters, genius in everything. They laughed in their phantom way; my uncle groaned, and shook his finger at me, like a warning ghost. On one occasion he caused to sweep upon me the figure of a hair-dresser, who forced me into a chair, and cut away the rich, clustering hair that hung over my shoulders. At the same time he declared that he would turn me out of doors if ever I wrote another line of

verse. He was in wrath because, having by mischance forgotten to make up a prescription, I had sent to a wealthy customer, a bottle of air corked and capped,—which, by an odd accident, was folded in a favourite poem of mine, on "The Emptiness of Things." My inadvertence gave offence. I wrote privately to the offended customer, a note of apology, of which I can almost remember the words, explaining what was the fact;—that, by one of those happy concatenations of thought that now and then occur, the mention of cream of tartar in the prescription had suggested to me a poem illustrative of the pastoral condition of life among the Crim Tartars, and while I was preparing my idea, I had forgotten that I was not also preparing the prescription. The customer in question, Mr. Milcan, a pursy man and a cowkeeper, was very unforgiving, and we lost him altogether.

I had an affection for my uncle Badham, and a desire for his good-will, partly founded on the fact that he entertained thoughts of leaving me the main bulk of his property, together with his shop. I promised faithfully that I would no longer look upon his customers as my public; that I would issue no more verse; and, upon that condition, I obtained leave to write it. My uncle, indeed, took my poetry at that time to be a ferment in young blood, a state of intellectual measles,—and thought it advisable that the eruption should not be suppressed.

For a time, however, I wrote no more poetry. My hair had been cut down to mere stubble, and the sudden change made me so cool in the head, that my inventive genius took more practical directions. Many things had for some time been awaiting investigation. I had observed that in every boiled potato placed upon my uncle's table, there were invariably to be seen three small holes in a right line with one another. The same observation I had made in other places, and a question had thus come to assume great prominence in my mind—Why are there always three holes in a boiled potato? I had even so early designed my anthropological treatise, (written in later years), on the Material of Trades, wherein I show why tradesmen absorb and become absorbed in the material by which they live. The butcher, as we all see, becomes fleshy, and consists of prime joints; the baker becomes white and doughy; the shoemaker brown and leathery; the lawyer's skin becomes converted into parchment; usurers turn yellow. The baker's blood, on the other hand, is, in some measure, yielded to his rolls; the lawyer writes on skin that represents a part of his own substance; the gall of the usurer goes with his gold. You will find the essay most important. Hereafter the fact that I wrote it will have its interest for my biographers.

I was at work upon this very subject, setting down thoughts as they occurred to me on one of the last leaves of my uncle's ledger, when one day soon after my hair had been cut, a lovely girl came into the shop. I knew her, of course; for she was no less distinguished a person than Miss Bridget Milcan, second daughter of the cowkeeper. She was admired in all the country round about us as the belle of Rochester. She was considered to be a girl of great vivacity and spirit; but I paid little attention to the fair sex, and I knew no more of her, than I know of her features and the sound of her voice. Considering how recently I had provoked her father, I feared lest Biddy Milcan might not be the bearer to my uncle of some hostile message, which I accordingly made haste to intercept. Biddy cast down her eyes when I appeared, and timidly held out to me the wrapper from her father's bottle.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she said; "but I thought this poem was too valuable to be destroyed. You might desire its return."

"It is of no importance, miss," I answered; "I have other copies, and if not, so mere a trifle——"

"O Mr. Speckles!" she said; "sir, may I then keep it? You cannot tell what consolation it has brought me,—how much I do feel the emptiness of things." She folded up the paper carefully, and put it in her bosom. "Indeed, sir," she went on to say, "I wished to consult you as a professional man." She fluttered like a moth in a pill-box, looked full at a red bottle in the window, through which the light streamed in a great flush over her face, and said, "I have felt for some months a strange sense of emptiness in the heart. Could you do anything for me?"

"My uncle, miss——"

"But I think *you* will be more likely to understand my case."

I thought a bit, and remembered that so far as I knew of the ailments of ladies, they occur only in the head, nerves, heart, and chest. The stomach is, out of delicacy, called the heart. I thought that I understood Miss Bridget's case, and asked about her appetite. She sighed, and said that it was bad. I at once recommended tripe. That is a digestible kind of food, which is, moreover, calculated to excite a failing appetite. The sense of emptiness could be removed, no doubt, with tripe. She shook her head, and said she wished me to prescribe. If I did not mind, she would call again in a day or two, and tell me how she was. I therefore undertook to fill up the void in her heart with medicine; and began with the remedies that seemed most cognate to her case—pectoral lozenges and stomachic pills. She paid me on the spot, and came again after two days; and, in fact, every two days, always complaining of the emptiness at her heart, which I strove always vainly to fill up with lozenges and pills. These were all regularly paid for by Miss

Biddy, and not entered on our books. She never asked for trust.

This kind of intercourse had gone on between us for about a month, when one morning Miss Bridget seemed unusually thoughtful. The void in her heart ached, she said, more than ever. "And, Mr. Speckles, I don't think you understand my case." She gave me a look straight into my eyes that puzzled me.

"Pardon me, Miss Bridget, I will change your lozenges." I looked confused.

She said, "Speak out, if you have anything upon your mind."

"I have, indeed, a serious question, that has long agitated me to the depths of my soul, and I think it is near solution."

"Ask it of me," she said.

"I am afraid," I stammered. "To do so would be impertinent."

"I promise," she replied, to take it in good part, whatever it may be. Ask me your question."

"Well," I said; "it is this. Why are there always three holes in a boiled potato?"

She bit her lip, and replied, quietly: "Because the cook progs them in the saucepan with a three-pronged fork. What else have you to ask?"

For the first time in my life I looked at her with admiration. The happiness of the suggestion pleased me. It was indeed far-fetched and improbable. Forks have no place in Epistemology, or the Theory of Knowing. Object plus subject, or matter mecum, is the substantial in cognition. The cook knows by matter mecum when she has boiled her potato; not by help of a three-pronged fork. Nevertheless, I was much struck by the elaborate ingenuity of Miss Bridget's reply; and, for the first time, my eye dwelt upon her with admiration.

"O Mr. Speckles!" she said again, looking straight at the red bottle, "how often I think of those beautiful lines in the poem which you generously suffered me to keep:

> To be is not to be. What is to have
> But not to have? A hollow mockery
> Is man's best prize. O void,
> That never will be filled, O vacancy,
> Come let me marry thee, since so must be,
> And must be must.

But let me be silent. Mr. Speckles, do you understand my case?"

She gave me another of those looks, and the truth flashed upon me. Void—marry; if she had proposed for me in form I could not have understood her better.

From that hour we got on rapidly. I made love as I could, and my suit prospered. Miss Biddy made no effort to conceal her visits from my uncle. Uncle Badham smiled upon her when they met; but it was certain that her father would not smile on me. It was, for that reason, agreed upon between us that we should elope to France, and there be married. I was to hire a post-chaise to carry us to Dover. On a certain day, when her father, she said, would be out, the milk-maids and cow-keepers all being in her confidence, the carriage might call boldly at her house to take her up, and then drive on. At the foot of Rochester Bridge I was to be in waiting, and there to mount the box, it being further understood that I was to respect her feelings before our marriage by riding outside during all coach journeys.

On the appointed day, at the appointed place and time, I was in waiting; a post-chaise and four approached the bridge. It was ours. It stopped. I only glanced in at the window to where Biddy sat, in the same leghorn bonnet and stiff gown of brocaded silk that I had so often seen her wear. I murmured "Bless you!" and leapt upon the box seat; the postboys gave me a good-humoured grin of recognition, and drove on. Before we had gone far, a heavy rain set in; but, as I had promised faithfully to ride outside, I kept my seat. In good time—for we drove at a tremendous pace—we arrived at Canterbury, where we were to dine. Our smoking horses were at rest before the principal hotel; waiters ran in and out; and, as the rain still fell in torrents, I shouted lustily for an umbrella as I leapt down, to hand my lovely prize into the inn. Landlord and waiters stood in file to receive her; but she seemed to be asleep. I touched her to awaken her. Horrible to relate, she collapsed. Nothing was there but her empty gown of that abominable silk, stiff as a board, that has now happily gone out of fashion. The gown had been seated in the coach, and Biddy's bonnet had been pinned to the coach-lining without any head in it at all.

I was befooled, deluded, made the victim of a hollow treachery. The postboys knew it—landlord and waiters knew it. Little boys were collecting. I dashed through them, leaving the whole nightmare behind me. In ten minutes I had reached the fields outside the town. I began to think. I had in my pocket enough money to carry me to France; but, failing my heiress, what should I do there? At Rochester there was my uncle, party to the plot against me—of that I felt sure: kindly, no doubt; but could I face him? Could I face the boys of Rochester, after eloping in a post-chaise and four, with Biddy Milcan's green brocaded gown?

For some days I wandered restlessly among small towns and villages, uncertain whether to return to Rochester or to go abroad. The next number of the Kentish Tally-ho decided me. Therein was contained a heartless paragraph to this effect: "Elopement Extraordinary. We understand that a romantic townsman, Mr. Bad—m Spec—s, who made, we think, an exceedingly bad spec on the occasion, eloped on Thursday last in a post-chaise and four, with a green silk brocaded gown and leghorn bonnet, lately in the service of our lovely and fascinating towns-

woman, Miss B—t M—n. The dashing lover sat, we believe, on the coach-box, where the flame of his affection, though unprotected by a great-coat, was not extinguished by a heavy storm of rain. Arrived at Canterbury, he was about to hand the object of his choice into the Corcoran's Arms, when it suddenly collapsed." (Did the fool mean that the hotel collapsed?) "The disappointed gentleman was heard to recite to the gown these lines, which, we believe, form part of a poem composed by himself:

"To be is not to be. What is to have
But not to have? A hollow mockery
Is man's best prize. O void,
That never will be filled, O vacancy,
Come let me marry thee."

There was more; but I read no more. After all, it was only then that I at last understood completely Biddy Milcan's case. Her father was in the secret. The whole town was in the secret. I and my philosophy were mocked. My very name had, for the first time suffered that malicious abbreviation of which I have since heard so much. The boys would be crying at my heels "Bad Spec!" I determined to quit Rochester.

It was in this way that I first became a traveller, and I have been upon my travels ever since. They have not enriched me. My Uncle Badham omitted my name from his will. My father died, having forgotten me; and my mother afterwards died blessing me, while I was still abroad. My brothers behaved to me according to my circumstances. Sometimes a speculation made me rich. Then I had letters from them signed Affectionately Mine. Soon afterwards perhaps I was a beggar, and affectionately theirs to no good purpose. In Germany I throve for a short time by publishing a perfectly new system of metaphysics, which I caused to be translated from my manuscript by a gentleman who, as I found afterwards, had an exceedingly imperfect acquaintance with the English language. The book was, on that account, made perhaps more incomprehensible than I should have desired; but it achieved a vast success, and was translated into English. By this means I discovered how extremely ill my German friend had done his work; because my book, when translated into English, was a continuous boggle and confusion of my meaning. I never put my own name to it, and I never will; although it is, to this day, a text-book among many students of metaphysics, both in Germany and in England.

As a speculator, I have made some good hits in America; though I have met with too many disasters. I did mean to mention some of the catastrophes I have survived; but I will content myself with naming one idea, that was designed to bring about a terrible catastrophe elsewhere. Grievously insulted by Miss Milcan and her father, I long brooded on a terrible revenge. At last, the method of it dawned upon me. If I could supersede the necessity of cow-keeping—crush Milcan with the milk-trade of the country! What was more easy? The idea was suggested to me by a trifling circumstance. A trifling circumstance it generally is by which great thoughts are suggested. I was English teacher at a school in Germany, and had been explaining something to an English boy, who, when I had done, said impudently, "That accounts for the milk in cocoa-nuts."

Millions of cocoa-nut trees in all parts of the globe are yielding seas of milk, and no account has yet been rendered of the precious off-ring. At once I planned a Cocoa-Nut Milk Churning Company. Although it is now too late to ruin Milcan, it is not too late for somebody else to make his fortune. Let him take good offices in the city, raise in shares a capital of two millions sterling; with which send out churns and cocoa-nut-crackers to the chief cocoa-nut districts, Labrador, Vancouver's Island, or wherever they may be. Let nuts be obtained by the usual method—throwing stones at monkeys; if necessary, it would be easy to send out pebbles. You see the rest at once. Crack nuts, and pour milk into shallow pans. In due time, skim; churn some of the cream; of which make cheeses, clotting the rest, according to the well known Devonshire process. Bring home the results in tins, with a sufficient quantity of pure milk in unbroken shells, to be supplied every morning fresh from the nut to the entire population. In support of my scheme, I have collected many facts upon the state of the milk now supplied to the metropolis, much of which comes from consumptive cows. Now has ever anybody heard of a consumptive cocoa-nut?

FLY LEAVES.

I HAVE just been pondering over that passage in Roman history which seems to clench the enormity of Nero's character by informing us that the imperial monster amused himself with killing flies. We shudder as we read, and feel in truth that he who could amuse himself with killing flies was fully capable of despatching the mother that bore him.

But the circumstances under which we ponder over any piece of information may make a vast difference in our estimate of the said piece of information—especially if it come to us through that doubtful and convertible medium which we call historic lore. According as we are sick, in love, and have not dined, or as we are stout, heart-whole, and in that replenished mood which Shakespeare says inclines great men to grant favours—I mean full of a good dinner (barring indigestion)—according, I say, as we are thus depressed or cheered, we are apt to look upon the dark or bright side of things, to go even beyond the gloomy decisions of the historian,

or to take up the cudgel in defence of the very man whom he loads with obloquy—in short, to doubt a Trajan, or to acquit a Nero.

That I am correct in these views is proved by the fact that both the best and the worst of historic personages have never wanted either a detractor or an apologist; and how account for such a phenomenon otherwise than by supposing, in each case, the judge to have been biassed either ab extrà or ab intrà? And what bias is so great as that of a man's own mood and temper, especially if lashed up and exasperated by Circumstance—that unspiritual god?

Yes! Man is the slave of association; and if there ever once has existed an argumentum ad hominem for or against a thing or a person, it is more than probable that, in exact accordance to the personal argument, we shall love or hate that thing or person for ever after. An infantine surfeit of oysters may so extend its influence over a whole life as to make us for ever regard with aversion that admirable mollusc: a whipping at school, while we were learning Greek or English history, may, according to the period it was inflicted in, impart to us doubts of the justice of Aristides, or absolute nausea respecting the patriotic virtue of Hampden. On the other hand, it may be questioned whether the eulogists of Saint Dunstan, of Bloody Queen Mary, and other execrated notabilities, may not have had holidays and sugar-plums, or a plum-cake from home, just at the moment when they were successfully getting over the Dunstan or Mary period. But how much is this reasoning intensified when the agreeable or disagreeable association is not past, but present and immediate: when (to drop the pleasant half of the argument) the nuisance, instead of being remembered dimly through the softening mists of life's great yesterday, glares upon us in the full blaze of to-day; of this very hour perhaps, when it is no more an abstract question, but a vital appeal to actual feeling? Then, indeed, the matter becomes a personal concern, under the smart of which cool impartial judgment is not to be expected from us. A younger brother, after he has stepped into the shoes of his elder, may mildly discuss the law of primogeniture; but, when he overhears himself called a scorpion, will he not storm and thunder against that same iniquitous, detestable, damnable right of the first-born? Doubtless, in such a mood, should he read the biography of some red-hot red republican, who treated of equality, and wrote down in blood "Les aristocrats à la lanterne!" doubtless, I say, in such a mood, he will hug to his heart the precious volume, and bless the author of it as a most clear-headed, kind-hearted, benevolent gentleman, and a true friend to humanity. So I, tormented by a dozen flies that will, by turns, make a perch of my nose, fretted by their hum, conscious that my finest thoughts are at their mercy (I was just going to write down some perfectly original ideas on the subject of political economy), smarting under the irritation and sting of the moment, happen to take up an odd volume lying on my table, and read: "Nero, that imperial monster, amused himself with killing flies." What are my feelings? Amused himself? I cry. No, no!—a thousand times no! Say rather, made it a duty to kill flies. For what pleasure could there be in killing flies?

I am sick of the whole paraphernalia of fly-killing,—of the man who wakes me at four o'clock by the maddening and monstrous cry of "Catch 'em alive O!—catch 'em alive O!" which goes and returns up and down the street like the drone of the creatures it professes to annihilate,—like, in fact, the ghost of some giant buzzer revenging his wrongs upon mankind. Then, I remember all the horrid results of the efforts (after all, abortive) of my sisters Jane and Ann to rid our neat little dwelling of the fly-pest. First there was an infallible recipe of saucers full of powdered sugar and pepper, in a state of mixture, set about the room (themselves disagreeable to behold), of which the effects were as follows: a visitor calls,—a lady in a beautiful sea-green pelisse. She sits down, affably, in the best chair. We converse. Suddenly, two or three flies, in kicking convulsions, fall upon her lap. The visitor starts, and—herself half in a convulsion—shakes off the nasty intruders. Is there a spot on the sea-green? 'Tis of this she thinks, not of my agreeable conversation. Twice, thrice, the kicking flies repeat their invasions. My sister Jane apologises: "We are so troubled with flies; and sugar and pepper is a capital thing to kill them; but, unluckily, when the pepper has stupefied them, the flies are apt to fall about."

After the sugar and pepper followed arsenic-paper soaked in plates full of milk. The results of this experiment were very similar to those of the last, with this addition,—that my sister's favourite lap-dog, poor old Fan (who was very fond of me, and had become an habitual house-pet), lapped up the milk one day, fell also into kicking convulsions, and expired.

The plague of tumblers followed—fly-traps, Ann called them; for my sister Ann began to be inventive in fly-catching. The fly-trap was thus constructed: a tumbler was nearly filled with soap-suds: to the top of the tumbler was fitted a circular piece of bread, with a funnel-shaped hole in the centre; the inner side of the bread was smeared with moist-sugar. So the flies smelt the sugar, crept down the ant-lion sort of sloping hole to get at it, were intoxicated by the fumes of the soap-suds (a thing I should never have imagined), and fell, half-stupefied, into the gulf below. Certain it is, that shortly after setting such a trap, the interior of the tumbler became a dark mass

of agonising flies. Such a sight was not pretty to look at. One day, to relieve my benevolent vision from such an eye-sore, I seized the tumbler from the console where it stood half-veiled by a pastille-burner, and madly emptied through the window its contents into the street, but on an old lady's bonnet! I had not the presence of mind of the nearly detected pickpocket, who cried "Stop thief!" nor the man who sneezed the loudest sneeze in the world (as he was apt to do), in Fleet Street, and who, when all the world turned round to look, turned round too. I stood, quietly transfixed, at the window, while the most respectable of old ladies screamed, looked up, saw the tumbler in my hand, repeated her scream, and lodged such an information against me as took me to Bow Street, extracted from me the price of a new bonnet, and bound me over with penalties to keep the peace.

The moral of this long parenthesis (for it is a parenthesis) brings me back (digressively) to the point which I desired to prove,—namely, that no man—not even Nero—could amuse himself by killing flies. The remedy would be worse than the disease. Bad enough as fly-killing is, even by proxy, still, to touch, squeeze, pinch, press out the existence of the enemy with your own fingers!—ga!—call that amusement! Nero might have fiddled while Rome was burning; but kill flies for his amusement—never! If he really did kill flies (fly-paper and tumbler-traps being unknown in the pagan ages), it was that he might say, "There are so many flies the less: I have benefited mankind!" And who can doubt but that the imperial monster (as you love to call him) did benefit mankind. Much as flies abound, who knows how much more, but for Nero, they might have abounded?

In a spirit similar to my own, Robert Southey as I very well know, used to bestow on spiders great laudation as public benefactors. "Do not kill them, Betty," he used to say to his maid—"Do not sweep away their webs. The more spiders and cobwebs, the fewer flies!" Moreover Robert Southey cherished wasps, which he would never allow to be chased from his apartment, because he believed (and I suppose Natural History vouches for the fact), that the wasp is the born enemy of the fly, and drives out that worst Egyptian plague from a room by sting and bur. In short, like Doris, in Gay's Fable, Southey thought it sin to

> Murder wasps like vulgar flies,

and—(accepting the wasp story as true)—I agree with him. Anybody that will do the dirty work of fly-killing, without dirtying either the hands or the imagination, shall be welcome. But is there no middle way?

I relapse to milder thoughts. Before me comes a vision of a curious toy made of numberless pieces of wood fitted together at right angles, so as to form a quantity of little boxes, each containing a shot or a pebble, something to make, if shaken, a rattling noise. The crossed piece of wood projected beyond the boxes in the manner of those pointed sheaths which enclose the filbert nut, the whole producing a complicated bristly sort of chandelier-like thing, which was to be hung in the centre of an apartment for the flies to settle on; while occasionally (if there were children in the house), the pendant ornament might be set a-swinging and shaking and rattling for the delectation of baby. Of course these unrefined machines were only to be met with in cottages; yet I can remember in the house of an aunt of mine, an old maid, that a delicate imitation of the cottage fly-perch was hung in a recess of the drawing-room. This was an airy construction of different coloured cut papers, pink, green, and blue—light as a gossamer—of a globy shape—meshy like a fishing-net—and all done by no hands but those of fairly fair, namely my virgin aunt. There seems to me something Sterne-like, in this tender consideration for the flies. Dear creatures! they shall have a perch, a nice swinging perch, to sit and dream upon, while they may fancy the coloured papers to be grass and flowers—that is if a house-fly can fancy anything. Ah! how these associations recall old days.

My aunt Selina's room comes back to me with the recollection of aunt Selina's fly-trap. The pretty green paper; the work-box with one bit of snowy muslin, half-embroidered, peeping out of it (it was a Tunbridge-ware box); and the room, though pure as Dian's temple, not cold nor uninteresting. There were many curiosities about it that had been brought by my Uncle Jim, the sailor, from the East Indies, pearly shells—tiny china cups (both always dusted by my aunt herself) and a globe of the most translucent glass, hermetically sealed, three-quarters full of water, on or in which (oh miracle!) floated, at different heights, beautiful ships, large line of battle ships, with ropes and sails, manned by tiny heroes; swans, moreover, and fish of astounding colours, each and all made of spun glass, were hanging in the globe. Why they were so assembled there was a marvel to me. Nay, I remember there was a balloon with a car attached to it, in which sat a gentleman and lady, who, in defiance of probability or possibility, oscillated some fathoms below the swans and the ships, yet with every appearance of nature and comfort.

In this charming room, if I remember rightly, there were no fly-specks on any of the beautiful objects it contained: yet the bright gilt picture frames (containing Indian views and family portraits on a small scale), were never (that I know of) villainously encased in that yellow gauze, which my sister Jane insists upon protecting the frames with (large looking glasses and all) in our drawing-room. To what end? To catch the London smoke and dirt, I do believe; they seem to

answer no other purpose, for, when the dingy yellow protectors are taken off the frames on company days, I declare the said frames are all over fly-blows. Was it my aunt's delicate paper fly-perch and her tender attentions towards the fly family that disarmed their rage—or (as I am inclined to suspect) were there fewer flies in those days? It must be so! London has doubled its population in the last thirty years. Have the flies been idle all that time, or have they not doubled their population too?

What makes me sure of the fact is, the strange fanciful care my sister Emma (who is since dead) and myself used to take of the small wretched residue of the flies in the winter. Now, they drop by thousands, clammy and torpid, out of the muslin curtains when they are drawn; but then we used to put them into paper boxes, and feed them with sugar. As was fitting, our cares had generally a singular and horrible result. The flies (most mysteriously) used to lose, first a wing, and then a leg, until they had scarcely anything left but a body. It was as if they were returning to second childhood, and a state of pupa. Yet still we fed them on, tenderly and undauntedly, and buried them with due honours.

We once caught our old French master—le Marquis de Vieuxbois—killing flies, in order (as he said) to put them out of the misère. We were sure he had taken a prominent part in the French Revolution.

There is a change in the scenery of my ideas. I am seated at dinner in an Italian albergo (being on a pleasure trip), at a small table in a corner of a barn-like and very dirty public room. At a neighbouring table, a dirty mother is stuffing a very dirty child with polenta. A dirty waiter is running about with strange black-looking eatables. He crams a piece of wood under one of the legs of my table, which has just given way, and nearly sends the Fritura over my legs. The thermometer stands at what continentals call thirty-five degrees of heat (Reaumur), which answers to about ninety-five of Fahrenheit, such accompaniments to a dinner may seem evils—but they are nothing—they are merged in the flies. The flies darken the air; harpy-like, the flies pollute the viands. In vain the waiter, wide-awake to the nuisance, covers all the dishes with cups, saucers, cabbage leaves, whatever he can lay hands on for the purpose, and only uncovers at the moment when I would taste what is set before me. In one instant, flies are swimming in the soup, deepening the tints of the ragout, making a black mass of the butter, swarming, bee-like, round the grape-like bunches, struggling in the Vino d'Asti! Eating a dinner? The flies are eating the dinner, and I am eating the flies.

Then rush into my mind certain verses,

> Busy, curious, thirsty fly,
> Drink with me, and drink as I!

What nauseating nonsense! and is it possible I could once have repeated that mawkish Anthology stuff (translated from I know not what noodle of antiquity) with enthusiasm! Shakspeare, even, honoured Shakspeare, I doubt thee here. Did'st thou really call fly-killing,

> A deed of death done on the innocent?

Did'st thou really expend on such a subject those golden lines,—

> But how if that fly hath a father and mother?
> How would he hang his slender gilded wings
> And buzz lamenting doings in the air?
> Poor harmless fly!
> That with his pretty buzzing melody,
> Came here to make us merry!

"Merry," too!

Reader, I am, at this present writing, at the seaside on a hot day, in a beautiful lodging (so Jane calls it), where I myself am bottled like a wasp upon a southern wall, very much plagued with flies, very hot, very angry, and very ready to sting. Yes! There it goes! One of those mighty buzzers, those enormous flesh-flies — emblems of gigantic fussiness, types of terrific power of boredom —has just whirled into the apartment, and continues sharply to whir about, stirring up the smaller fly gentry, making a preponderant base to their tiresome treble, dashing furiously against walls, ceiling, window-panes; of course never finding its stupid way out through any widely-opened casement—buzz, buzz, buzz! Ah! he is silent! Is he gone? No, only entangled in the muslin curtain, where he now makes (most unmusical, most melancholy) a quivering, dithering sound, like a watch running down when the main spring is broken. Then loose again, and da-capo, with his buzz, buzz! fuss, fuss!—then really resting for a few moments, only to get up fresh energy, and make his drone the worse for the short relief of silence. I must let out my rage. "Nothing relieves a man," says Burns, "like a good hearty blast of execration." O, thou world-old plague, thou abominable Baalzebub (for that is thy true Satanic name; a name that means, in good old Syriac, a muck-fly, truly indicative of thy nature and lineage), did not the ancient enemy of mankind, as soon as he had succeeded in his designs under the serpent's form, resume thine, the true aboriginal fly-form, that he might for ever plague those whom, having injured, he hated? Is it not under the form of a fly that thou has sucked old women in the nape of the neck, leaving thy hateful mark behind, whereby poor old Dame Alice, or Mother Samwell (as the case might be), was convicted of witchcraft and commerce with the devil, and so was ducked till she was drowned, or was burnt at the stake, or was hanged by the neck till she was dead?

To drop the apostrophical style, which in

the long run gets tiresome, I have beheld with my own eyes what an old grudge is that of man against the flies. Our injuries are of a long date. At Pompeii, in the old Roman guardhouse, I have seen written a soldier's malediction on the many flies. I have seen it (I will not plague my reader with the original, which, besides, I have forgotten) scrawled in red chalk, covered up for centuries—restored fresh as to-day to bear witness to eternal truth.

Who plagued Io, and made her scream out (as well she might) that fearful antistrophe:

> Ah, ah! dost thou vex me so
> That I madden and shiver?

Who but the gad-fly, as that wonderful fount of information, every schoolboy, knows? Who drives the lion mad amidst the Lybian sands? The gad-fly, as Mansfield Parkyns will inform you. Who made a spot on my Madonna's nose? (Madonna said to be by Carlo Dolce.) The bluebottle fly!

Who is the most intolerable torment in Sikkim, an insatiable blood-sucker, an insinuating devil that gets into the minutest rent in the clothes, hangs on to the eyelids, and chooses all the tenderest parts of the body wherein to insert its villainous proboscis? The midge-fly, as Dr. Hooker—Joseph Dalton Hooker—will certify in his Himalayan journal. Who brought me to shame and grief last Friday (day of ill-omen: I'll never have a dinner-party on that day again) when the round of beef that was set before me and my expectant friends was found to be converted to carrion—fit, or even not fit, for the dogs? The flesh-fly, as my sister Jane will take her bible-oath of. Who made me rap out an oath and kick my dog? Fly, everlasting fly. Occasional mischiefs I understand; lions I pardon; serpents I tolerate (they do not come across me); sorrows and trials are man's lot, and have their good side; but flies are the great problem of existence—dirty, tormenting, small, irritating, morally-useless flies! Flies, as to whom maligned Nero was the benefactor of mankind.

SIX YEARS IN A CELL.

It is said that the first year of solitary imprisonment is the worst to bear. In my case the first year was made the most endurable by an incessant occupation of the brain upon the planning of escape. When hope of escape was first removed came the worst time for me, while the mind struggled to regain its equilibrium. The busy brain was to be quieted, the energies were to be repressed, the man was to submit to years of burial alive during that period of life when manhood is most active.

It was October when I first entered my cell as a political prisoner at Brtchsal, and very soon afterwards began the heating with hot air. There were no means of shutting the opening out of which it came in a constant blast like the sirocco. The window could not be opened by the prisoner himself; he must, if he wished to have it open, ring for the overseer who came with a long stick. My hair had been cropped so much, that I felt every draught, and became almost mad with headache and with toothache. The feet were cooled by the cold current of air coming through the badly-fitting door and window, whilst the head was swimming always in a steam—worse than a steam, for it was not moist, but hot and dry—of thirty degrees of Reaumur. Came my turn to go down to the walking-yard, then I must go, whether it poured or not. The same linen-dress was to be worn summer and winter, and we were more acutely sensitive to the inclemency of the weather, because we were not only dried by heat in-doors, but also fed upon the very lowest diet that would maintain life. They gave me a small cast-off soldier's great-coat, very short and threadbare, which I should have been glad to use as protection against the rain, if I had been permitted. This, however, was for wear in the cell, not in the court-yard; that was quite out of the question. When the doctor of the prison saw me cast down in the first days, he said, in a light, swaggering manner:

"O! I have seen people here, who would, at first, run up the walls, but who became very soon quite contented. Probably you will become blind, but that is nothing, it will soon be over."

Indeed, by the bad food in the prisons not seldom is such blindness produced; the prisoners call it the night-fog, and it is cured by better food—flesh-meat or liver.

The doctor became, in my time, director of the prison, and was in the highest degree zealous on behalf of order. When I saw him he was generally running about the house with a brush and a varnish-pot. It was his whim that all the cells must be exactly alike in their arrangements.

A very horror in the eyes of the new director was the person who had rented the purveying of the prisoners with the allowed food. She was a most respectable substantial burgher-woman, the wife of a baker of Bruchsal, who understood her business, and cared very little about fresh instructions in it. This stout lady was befriended by the burgher members of the board of control, but the director was determined to get rid of her, and he succeeded. The Grand Duke himself was our next chief of the kitchen, and we were pretty nearly starved by him and his administration. They must needs experiment upon retrenchment, and reduced the daily expenditure upon each prisoner for breakfast, dinner, and supper to a penny. When I asked one of the officers what it could matter to them whether we had a little more or less food, and why the manager

was not suffered to stay any longer, he answered, that it was a victory for the officers of the prison. The prisoners became lean and weak, and there was a hunger in the house like that in a beleaguered fortress on the eve of surrender.

By the Prussian physician, who was for a time in the house when my regular medical adviser chanced to be ill, I was allowed daily two chopins of milk, and, instead of the pound and a half of black bread, six ounces of white bread. This had been for a long time almost my only food, besides the two ounces of meat every other day, given us in morsels on a skewer, like the London cat's meat. But after the new order even this help failed me. The bread was as bad as possible, and the milk —more water than milk—stunk so intolerably that I turned sick, only at the smell. The doctor said this was mere richness of butter. The milk was, in truth, kept in a tub that could not be well cleaned. There was nobody in the kitchen who understood anything; all kitchen work, under the economic rule, was done by prisoners, for no woman was again suffered to enter the house as a servant.

Often I was so hungry that I could not sleep, and was driven to appease the craving of my stomach by water, which produced diarrhœa. The worst time was directly after winter, when the hot air which had lessened my appetite was at an end, and the body out of which it had sucked the juices, cried for food. Then I often begged a bit of bread of my overseer, who gave it me with tears in his eyes; but it is right also to say that if I asked the doctor for a little augmentation of my diet, a piece of brown bread was never denied me.

I must needs talk about eating: meals are even greater events in the life of a lonely and a hungry man than in the life of a man cheerful and well-fed. At the bottom of my prison life lay hunger, and from this bodily condition came, as will be seen, peculiarities in the condition of my mind.

Once when I was occupied in calculating the amount of nutriment in our food, and comparing it with that of the food I used to have in one day out of prison, I was surprised by our government inspector. I laughingly told him of my speculation. "O," he answered, "great physiologists have said to me, that man can live on four ounces of bread a day."

The results of such a life were soon apparent. I became depressed in mind more than I ever was before. Sometimes I was weak enough to hope, when I went to bed, that I might not awake again; and when at half-past four, that dreary bell marked the beginning of a new day, I sat wretched upon my miserable couch, and silent tears rolled down my pale and hollow cheeks.

It is a hard thing to see before one a long day, which offers nothing but sorrow and vexation: not even the shadow of a joy: not even such as the most unhappy, the poorest of free men may enjoy. They can go into the field or the wood, and there are given by God to all under His sky a great many sources of enjoyment, of which the least one would have tinged even my dismal cell with a rosy hue.

Sometimes—not caring much for the Prussian muskets that were fired at those who peeped abroad— I looked through the window, to see, when in its bloom, a large cherry-tree which was beyond the prison wall; or to see upon the road men, women, and children, and to hear their voices.

The only liberty I had in this hive was during the night, when I was sleeping; for by the emaciation of the body, the more subtle faculties of the soul, fettered by it when it is strong enough, appeared to be set free. From my earliest youth I had had a great propensity to vivid dreams. These dreams were now my greatest pleasure, and it was almost as good to me as if I had been every night at a play of a great many acts. The most lucid dreams one has, always occur towards the morning, and then, say the old women, they assume the character of visions. In the prison I had very often dreams of this kind, and sometimes they were of a kind that might almost have passed for revelations.

I received no newspapers, and it was severely forbidden to any one of the officers of the prison to give us political intelligence. This had been, since the new order of the things in the house, so strictly adhered to, that I heard not earlier than in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five something about a war with Russia. Of a Napoleon the Third I received the first news by an almanac, in which I came upon such a name with great wonder in the list of sovereigns. Nevertheless I had seen something of political occurrences in my dreams; and I will give a few examples, assuring my readers that I tell them strictly as they were.

Once, I saw a great palace, in which preparations were made for a festivity. I heard in the kitchen the head-cook command his myrmidons, and everything was in a great bustle. I had never been in Vienna, but in the dream I knew that I was in that city. What have I to do with festivities in Vienna, I thought, the next morning? At that time the emperor married, and, by an act of so-called grace, pardoned more than two hundred of the political prisoners.

I was, another night, in St. Petersburg. I saw many troops marching, and, upon a large square, recruits were being exercised: everywhere active preparations for war were going on. This was at about the beginning of the Russian war.

Another night I was led to an eastern country. I was in a low wooden building enclosed by board hedges. From the window I

saw, to my astonishment, red-coated English soldiers advancing as tirailleurs. I heard and saw their shots; but I could not see the enemy, the ridge of a little hill hindering the view. The English made a movement, and were soon behind the hill; but, near to my building I saw advancing a strange-looking corps of soldiers, which it puzzled me to understand next morning; they were dressed in an eastern fashion, but kept western order. They were formed in a battalion's column, advancing in a regular trot, like the Chasseurs d'Afrique; they advanced with a sort of terrible grunting. Next morning I thought I must have been in India, and seen Englishmen at war with some of the people there; but these Easterly-dressed soldiers seemed to fight on the same side with the English. Perhaps what I saw was a battalion of Zouaves, about whom I knew nothing.

At other times I was led in my dreams before a fortress, where I saw soldiers working in trenches, cannons, and other evidences of active warfare, and yet I knew nothing about Sebastopol. The first I heard of the siege was in the middle of the present year.

With persons dear to me I was always in a certain connection, and I knew almost always when a letter was coming, even if I had no reason to expect one. If the letter on its way were written in a hurry, I seldom knew anything about it; but, if the thoughts of the writer were intensely fixed upon me, as was made apparent by the letter, I knew of it always. That I almost every night sat at dinner and ate and drank heartily, was only a token that my body cried always for food. This dream-dinner, alas! did not satisfy; the dishes I ate had not even any taste.

But, enough of my dreams, which I tell only to show what the working of the mind in the starved body may be like.

My nerves were so much excited, that every uncommon noise or cry in the house caused my heart to beat more quickly; and sometimes the internal pain in my head, especially in the temples, which seemed pierced by a red hot iron, made me fear that I might lose my reason. One evening, lying in my bed, I was alarmed by an almost unearthly roaring, which continued for some time, and came nearer and nearer to my cell. It was that of a mad prisoner, who had pushed aside the overseer opening his door, and ran about the house.

Through the overseers I knew that in this prison cases of madness occurred very often, and almost always it came to its outbreak in the night. They told me that it was something frightful to enter such a cell, and that they often roused a comrade to go with them.

Bad, and especially insufficient food is not proper for solitary prisoners; it predisposes them to aberrations, especially such of them as have been used to a more opulent life. By new regulations, convicts enter the house of correction for several years, with an addition of even sixty or seventy days' fasting and darkness, which must be endured during the first year.

He who is punished by hunger-diet (hunger-kost) has only a chopin (not quite a pint) of the dog soup twice a-day, and nothing else. The localities for the imprisonment in darkness (dunkel-arrest) are in the ground-floor of the small round towers which are in each corner of the external wall. The place of confinement differs not very much from a cell, but there is no bed in it and no window, only a slit in the wall, which is darkened, and even when opened it lets in but little air. The smell in these dens is therefore very bad, and one of the officers said to me, that he would rather do anything than stay for only an hour in one of them.

And now that I am speaking of punishments, I will mention the different forms of punishment adopted in the Bruchsal house. Little infractions of the rule of the house are punished by reprimands before the conference of the house-officers, or by deprivations of favours and permissions; others by hunger or dark-arrest, deprivation of the bed, the putting on of chains, and applying of the "strafstuhl" (chair of punishment). This instrument is a wooden arm-chair. The delinquent sitting upon it is attached to it by straps fixed to his neck, breast, belly, arms and legs. By the straining of these thongs at so many parts of the body, the circulation of the blood is very soon checked, and the result is a most painful sensation, which increases every moment. Sometimes, prisoners have been for six hours in this situation, until blood came from their mouth, nose, and ears. I have heard such poor sufferers roar in a manner that made people who passed on the road stand still and listen, and at which even the sentries could not suppress their horror. Corporal punishment, nevertheless, is abolished in Baden, and the torture also.

For the common prisoners, work is a relief; without it most of them would become mad. They are interested in their work in more than one respect. They have done, when free, the same or about the same, and their work is not humiliating to them; they have an opportunity of learning in the house several new trades, which they could not afford when free; and they understand very well that in this manner their capital for life is augmented. Have they done their day's work, one-third of a penny is paid daily to each; and if a prisoner be diligent and skilful, he can earn more, up to twopence. This is not much; but after having finished an imprisonment of perhaps three or four years, the convict receives a little stock of money, which will help him greatly.

The director once wondered at one of the better educated prisoners, who would not become a joiner or learn any trade, but was content to do nothing nobler than French-polish chairs. I understand this prisoner quite well. If common work must be done by a well educated man, who could perform the highest things perhaps, a pure mechanical employment not too tiring would be the most welcome, because it alone allows a free play to the thoughts. It is very disagreeable to have work which is too trivial to interest the worker, but which cannot be done without constant attention. My own, for instance—shoemaking—was of this kind; and irritable as I was made by hunger, hot air, and bad smells, I became still more so on this account.

Of course I felt my solitude deeply, but it was not so oppressive to me as the society of common prisoners had been; and the visits of the officers of the house were quite sufficient for my general want of society. By the regulations of the house, drawn up by the ministry, which understands nothing at all of prison and prisoners, every prisoner is to receive daily six visits by officers and persons employed in the house. This is impracticable. Six visits a day would have driven me mad, and I was contented that the director came to see me once a week, the parson as often, the doctor every fortnight, and the administrator, teachers, and head overseers sometimes. These visits would have been more agreeable, if one had not always been compelled to think that they were made for government purposes. I knew that official reports were always wandering from Bruchsal to Carlsruhe. The officers, who did not like such business, although it formed a regular part of their office, were very agreeable to me, and I expected their visits with pleasure; but our conversation moved in very narrow bounds; not only political intelligence, but even the supply of the most innocent news concerning things that had occurred since eighteen hundred and forty-nine being prohibited.

There were a small number of books in the library of the house, which were lent to the prisoners, who were not suffered to have more volumes in a cell than five, including the Bible and the schoolbooks. Most of these books were of that kind of popular literature produced by talkative village parsons, who almost make Christianity itself a weariness. There were, however, other books which had been presented to the house by several booksellers when, in eighteen hundred and forty-eight, so many political prisoners were awaiting trial. Among these were some very good books—German, English, and French—although the wiseacres in Carlsruhe had rejected some of the most valuable.

After sundry changes from permission to restriction, I myself was allowed to receive from Frankfort English and French books, but no German books, and no newspapers, or even reviews, Dingler's Polytechnic Journal (German) being an exception. My chief political intelligence I got in the last half year (eighteen hundred and fifty-five), from Household Words, of which I perused thirty volumes of the Tauchnitz edition with an eagerness that made me sometimes ill. Books in these foreign languages were permitted to me as being necessary to a useful study; German books would have been regarded as a mere pleasure.

But books were not enough to stay the craving of the mind for occupation. Sometimes I amused myself with the mental execution of some difficult plan. I was a very long time occupied over the arrangement of a colony in South America, founded upon moderate communistic principles; then I had very much to do with air-balloons, and invented a new manner of steering them. Always having meddled a little with chemistry, electrotype, &c., I was indefatigable in inventing new things, and I have no less than five hundred ideas of this kind set down. If I would give myself a great treat, I indulged in day-dreams, supposing this or that situation, and spinning it out through all its consequences. I was often so much excited by these idle fancies, that the perspiration stood upon my forehead, if it were in summer time.

We were permitted to write one, or, in urgent cases, two, letters a month, and to receive also. These letters were indeed a great comfort; but the thought that they would be read, not only by those persons to whom they were addressed, but also by the director, and the parson, and all other prison officers who had a mind to do so, made me always so angry, that I could not forbear writing things very disagreeable to intrusive eyes. It was very unwise, doubtless; for such letters as bred much objection by the nature of their contents, were sent, not to my wife, but to the ministry at Carlsruhe. But no doubt I had the spirit of a rebel.

Out of the prison we were very poor; we had lost all. My wife had sold her trinkets during the vain effort to free me. Even upon a heritage of my aunt, who died at this time, the government of Baden laid its hand. My wife was compelled, therefore, to try her little dexterities, and painted flowers on china, and worked with her skillful tapestry-needle like a grisette. At last she accepted a place in a family of many children, who had lost both parents. She tried to replace the lost mother, and won very soon the love and respect of her pupils, and of their relations. In this position she was, at least, sheltered against want. She came to see me sometimes,—every year once; for, the journey from Berlin was costly; and although we could not deny ourselves this interview of half-an-hour a year,

it always made us wretched. There she stood, several paces distant, behind a narrow wire-net, where I could not even distinguish her features. The first quarter of the half-hour passed almost without a word; she wept silently; and I ground my teeth, and held the bars of my cage as if I would try to break them. The half-hour past, she went away without power to kiss me or press my hand, and I was not to see her again till after another long, long year!

I have said before that with the change of the director our position became far more disagreeable. The mercilessness with which the director sent away every overseer, even upon suspicion, made our keepers very shy. No overseer was permitted to enter any cell without the knowledge of the person to whose section it belonged, he being answerable for any disorder there detected.

No overseer was permitted to bring his cloak into the house; it must be deposited in the porter's room, to render it impossible that any of them should smuggle anything in or out. Every one who would bring anything—even a shirt or a bottle—outside the door, could not do so without a written permission from the administration. Nay, there was even a proposal to search daily the pockets of the overseers! Higher officials could pass with their cloaks, although amongst them there were some of the most likely men to thieve. One head overseer stole like a raven, and great baskets full of linen and other things went at each time. The thefts were detected, and he was dismissed.

It is not to be wondered at if there is theft and peculation here and there by some among a host of underpaid officials. Baden has officers of every kind, and they can only be paid badly. There are ministers of every kind; even there is a Palmerston, who has much business on his hands if the regent wants a coat from Paris. But, there is no person employed in Baden whose pay will exceed five hundred pounds a-year.

The overseers in the house of correction are paid very scantily indeed; even such as are commissioned by the ministry have not more than fifty shillings a-month; and it is very hard, upon such a sum, to live with a great family, even in Baden. For this payment they have much to do, and their life is almost as hard as that of the prisoners, nay, even harder. Only a few of them are permitted to stay at night with their families. At half-past four, winter and summer, they must be in the prison, and attend, each to his thirty prisoners. Each of them must understand some trade, and pass an examination. From morning till night he labours up and down the stairs, always in fear lest he neglect any of the million particular orders and arrangements, of which one part makes the others puzzling. If he do not understand these orders as the director means them to be understood; if he do not submit without word or gesture of displeasure to the sovereign will of his petty despot; he may be sure he will lose his bread, and his family may go a-begging.

During the last four years I was in the same wing, and had but one overseer, my good and brave Sebastian. Has anybody ever read a history of a prisoner without a kind goaler? Mine was most kind. His father had been mutilated by the fall of stones in a quarry, and died. He himself had worked hard also as a quarryman, and, by labouring in the heat of the sun with covered head, he had lost nearly all his hair. His father left him a small freehold in a village not far from the Neckar, where he lived till he must needs become a soldier. He had learned basket-making; but the failing of the potato crops for several years pressed too hard upon him, and he found it difficult to keep himself and family; therefore he tried to get a place as overseer in the house of correction.

Having no other occupation, and being always accustomed to observe other people, I studied with the utmost care this man, and at last knew him so well, that he could not even conceal a thought before me. Very often I amused myself by telling him his secret wishes, to his utmost wonder. He was to me as if he had been made of glass; but indeed this honest soul could bear to be of glass; the more one saw through it, the more one loved it.

Of course I studied the other officers of the house also. The director improved with the years; and if I had any reason to complain of him, I will not do so, knowing very well that I often provoked him unnecessarily: urged to do so by my irritable state. Many others in his place would have behaved far otherwise. He angered me very much; but he was not ill-natured, and his behaviour was always gentlemanly. He has written several works about prisons and the solitary system. His last appeared in eighteen hundred and fifty-five. It is very well written, and there are many valuable things in it; but, even for this reason it would be the more necessary to point out its errors. I will only remark, that all such books, written by government officers, ought to be read with the utmost suspicion. The statistics of the prison are illusory. I wish the overseers had to write annotations frankly on the work of their director. They would make a curious appendix.

To explain how I kept up my courage, I must not tell either my religion or my character; but I can tell what means I employed besides to overcome the dreaded horrors of confinement. The first rule is to throw away, as soon as possible, every hope:

> Hope, eager hope, the assassin of our joys,
> All present blessings treading under foot,
> Is scarce a milder tyrant than despair.

One comes only to a settled state, which permits even a kind of enjoyment, when all is done with hope. Accepting, then, the years of solitude as perfectly inevitable, one must consider how to pass them, how to keep oneself amused and occupied. Recollections of the past will very soon be exhausted as a means of killing time. Sometimes, however, one is not disposed for any other thing. In such a frame of mind, I wrote down more than four hundred names of young men who had been with me in the cadet-house, and was absorbed in this occupation for several weeks. Very often I rose in the midst of the night to write down with chalk any name which I had been endeavouring for days to recollect. This will only do for a short time; and one must needs try to create little joys where great ones are denied.

In our courtyard were many interesting and important things; there were flowers, birds, mice. I love flowers, but I am not quite so sentimental with them as the prisoner in Picciola; I was more attracted by the little mice which played beneath the wood piled for a long time round our walking yards; or by the birds. There were lodged a host of sparrows under the roof of the house, and in spring time one could see the young married couples sitting upon the gutter. Where another gutter branched off the rent must have been dearer, I suppose, for there I saw always quite respectable-looking, fat sparrow gentlemen, enjoying the shadow of a little Semiramis garden, owing its existence to some earthy stuff that came down from the roof, to which the seed, probably, had been carried by the sparrows themselves.

It was prohibited to give bread to the sparrows, but I did not care about such things; and, hungry as I was, always allowed them the whole crumb of my small white slice. They knew me very well, my visor notwithstanding. They watched my coming; and, as soon as I stepped out of the door, flew round about me, and begged for their food. When they missed me, and sat upon the roof, I only signed to them with my hand, and down came the whole army in the greatest hurry. They came almost sitting upon my feet, and would have been much tamer but for some prisoners, who could not forbear trying to catch or to kill them! When they had little ones, they led them into my yard, and the whole family came close to my feet, the young things fluttering, and with wide open yellow beaks, and the parents slily looking at me, and catching the soft crumbs with which they could feed their little ones without any other preparation. My sparrows were the wonder of all the overseers.

And we had not only sparrows, but redtails and wagtails also. The latter I loved very much, and observed once a little scene performed by wagtails which I cannot forbear telling. Had Shakspeare seen it, he would never have used the word wagtail as a byword for that cowardly fellow cudgelled by brave Kent.

For a long time I had noticed a poor cock wagtail which had lost the half of a foot, and could not run after the insects as his comrades did, but must hobble slowly beneath the edges of the flower-beds, to see what he could catch. This poor invalid had an enemy who pursued him everywhere. One day he was attacked quite unexpectedly, and must prepare for battle as well as he could. He did so like a clever fellow, spreading out his tail and wings, and supporting himself against a piece of turf. The miserable aggressor stood in the middle of the way, a few yards off, and advanced step by step in the manner of a fencer. He seemed much stronger than my little friend, whose feathers were not smooth at all, and who looked ill and weary. I was indeed sorry for him, and considered whether I should play the part of Fate or not, when there came through the air, like a flash of light, another male bird, which, with shrieking and with a fury I never had expected of a wagtail, charged the dastardly ruffian, put him speedily to flight, and followed in pursuit. I could not see how he plucked him, but it did me good to think that he was giving him a lesson. After some time, my doughty knight came back; and it was pretty to see with how much care he examined his weak friend, to see whether he had been hurt.

I had been told that several of the prisoners had in their cells sparrows, or a mouse, and I wished also to have a comrade in my solitude. Myself a prisoner, I would not have a free bird of the woods, but a canary bird, which never had known freedom, and was more able to breathe the air in our rooms. After much ado, I obtained leave to keep a canary bird. The brother of my wife brought me one from Frankfort. Of course I was very anxious to possess my little friend, but the bird was kept in the office more than a day, because the administrator (in the director's absence) had discovered that he was a male bird, and very likely to sing, which would be very much against the "seriousness of the place."

They had sent me, indeed, the finest bird they could find; his song was not so quavering as that of many other canary birds, but very sweet and soft, and mixed with notes of nightingales and other birds, which had been his companions. Used to company, he felt himself lonely in my cell, and became very tame. He ate from my hand, and often sat down upon my shoulder or upon the edge of my book when I was reading—to sing there.

Winter set in, and with it came the usual killing sirocco into my cell. My little bird began to ail, and soon ceased singing. The

director said he had the house of correction decline, and indeed it was so. The poor thing coughed and groaned all night. Spring came, and I thought him saved, when the month of May brought with it much cold. The bird had lost almost all his feathers, and must have felt cold; but he was always sitting in the water as if he would quench an inward fire. One morning, when I came from the yard, I found him dead. I would not bury my friend in a gaol, but wrapped him in moss and laid him in a box, which I sent to Frankfort, where he slept by the side of a faithful dog.

When my wife came, in the summer, she brought with her two other canary birds, a male and female. They were selected from among a great many pairs with great care, and were very beautiful. The golden yellow male was named by me "Hans," and his little wife, who had a beautiful crown, and was a first-rate beauty, was called, after a fair friend, "Fritzchen." These two companions were a source of lasting joy and comfort. To observe them, and to become acquainted with all their little particularities, was an amusement of which I never tired; and if the dark spirit threatened to possess me, the warbling of my little David smoothed my brow.

I had now friends near me to love, to observe, to care for, and to nurse. What a pleasure when they began to build a nest! When it was finished, there came nice little eggs, and Fritzchen sat upon them, sneezing in a small way quite softly, which I never had heard yet of female birds, and which they only do in expectation of the mother's joys. Hans often inspected his treasure, and both then sat upon the brim of the nest, chatting tenderly.

When I could reasonably expect young birds, I looked every morning in the nest, while the young mother was away for a moment to drink, to make a hurried toilet, or to nibble a few dainties which honest Sebastian the overseer had brought. At last my hope was fulfilled, and I saw the young bird earlier than its own mother. The egg was burst just in the middle, and between the two hollows moved a little thing with a head as big as the body. When the mother came back to the nest, she took one of the egg-halves into her beak, and flew with it upon the other cage, where Hans was sitting. When he had seen the egg-shell, she dropped it, and both flew to the nest, where the father with evident pleasure looked at his first-born. Then was there for a time much soft chatting and billing, and then Fritzchen nestled happily upon their new-born. No king could have more pleasure than I had in observing the joy of my little birds.

When the hen sits upon her nest, the male must feed her; for, if she were to go away for food, the eggs would become cold. This feeding seems a great amusement to them both; and if they are very sociable during their courtship, the hen always flutters with her wings, and begs food, which her lord and master gives her playingly. The feeding of the young ones also is the business of the father, as long as they are in the nest; and I have often seen Hans pushing aside his little wife when she has offered to meddle with his duties.

Hans became very tame, and learned various tricks. I laid him upon his back and he must lie still, as if he was dead. I could take him by both his wings, by one wing, or by his tail or feet, without his giving a sign of life. His little head hung down, and you would have thought him dead, but for his dark little roguish eyes, which he would never shut. Sometimes I made a tube of paper, and loaded him in it, as if he were the ball in a pistol, as I had seen done by jugglers. At first he tried to escape me, and I always had trouble to catch him again; therefore I made and fastened to his foot a little tongue of soft leather, like the shoe of a falcon. When the poor fellow saw himself thus fettered, he laid himself upon his back, and played through all his little tricks unbidden. I could not find it in my heart to fetter him again.

The two finest of my three young birds I lost. They were very wild, and, in playing, they ran against the cage, fell down, and broke their necks. The youngest one was never flurried. If there was some bird of prey seen through the window, and his father warned, the little clever thing looked heedfully about before it flew through the door of the cage. If it had not done so, it would not have been here in London now, while I write, attentively examining my paper.

Hans made a trip into the world, but the poor fellow came badly off. Every Saturday I cleaned my window, and it was always a great pleasure to me, for then I stood upon a step inside my cell, and could look far into the country. Only once, I was led, after much entreating, by an overseer into the schoolroom: from the windows of which I could look upon the town and the delicious landscape. I enjoyed the sight for five minutes only; but it was one of the greatest pleasures I had in all these six years. When I was cleaning my window once, Hans got out of his cage and came to me, fluttered a little, amazed by the open air, and, before I could close the window, flew through it and directly over the roof of the house. What hours of anxiety were those that followed! But it was summer time, and he would not perish of the weather.

I was not to lose the father of my little family. Having seen enough of the world in an hour or so, he sat down upon the wall near the sentry, and there sang. The soldier tried to catch him with his helmet, but failed. The bird, who was used to be caught, did not fly away, and when the soldier tried to catch him with his hands he succeeded. It was a Baden soldier, and he knew that the

bird was mine. He gave him to the porter, who permitted him to fly about his room. When the poor fellow was caught again to bring him to me, they must have handled him roughly, for one of his wings hung down, and under it was a blood-blister as thick as a hazel-nut.

When Hans came into the cage and sat there crest-fallen, his little wife was glad, though she seemed not to care much about him; but he did not answer some of her questions, and she then became uneasy, looked at him from all sides, placed herself then close to him, and lifted with her little beak the hurt wing to look under it. I have never seen such a thing from any other bird. After having discovered that Hans was much hurt, she chirped comfort in his ear, kissed him, and he answered her tenderness as languishingly as a wounded man would have answered the soft whisper of his wife. She was constantly busied about him, and did all she could to show how much she pitied his misfortune.

I bathed the hurt wing all day to prevent inflammation, and next day the surgeon of the house performed an operation, which was very painful, but of the best consequences. I bound up the limb, and, after a few months, poor Hans could fly again, although he always hung his wing, so that Sebastian used to say he was carrying a sabre.

Next year I got only one young bird; he was christened Bütchen. When I left the prison, my birds, of course, went with me. They looked rather shabby, and would not have lived another winter.

But, canary birds do not content man fully. I proposed to myself objects that were just attainable, and worked till I attained them.

The first thing I longed for, was to throw aside my miserable work as learner of shoe-making, and to be permitted to draw only. Rheumatism in one arm helped very opportunely, and I was suffered to draw, by paying to the house more than double the sum I could have earned as a shoe-maker. My pen-drawings were my own, and I sent them to my wife. In my cell there was a permanent exhibition, for my work interested me, and many of my visitors also. My pen-drawings were highly esteemed by the printsellers, and several of them sold very well. The thought that by them I could perhaps help my wife in her great struggle with the world, made me most eager to work, and I did so from sunrise till night. Occupied with a drawing that interested me I rose with pleasure, and the day passed swiftly away. I was very often so gay that I sang all day long, until entreated by the overseers to hold my tongue, because it was not permitted to trouble the seriousness of the place by such glad notes.

When I got writing materials I began to write; but, in this solitude I had so much material in store that too much at once thronged to my pen. Nevertheless, I wrote many things, and on the most various themes: Pictures of the Life of Animals; Letters of a Hermit; on Religion; on Military Art; a great many essays and recollections of my life. I remarked that too deep speculations were not in accordance with the insufficient food. Sometimes my head was so fatigued that I could not so much as read more than four or five pages.

The learning of languages I judge to be the fittest occupation for a prisoner. When free I never could spare time to learn the English language; as prisoner, I had more leisure than I wanted, and was glad to teach myself the language of the free. It was a curious thing, when I came to England, and had to put my lonely prison studies to the test. It was, as if I had learnt playing the piano, on an instrument provided with keys only, producing no sound. This is now the first time, that I try to express my thoughts by writing in the English language; it is to me as if I must walk with a hundred weight attached to my foot.

Thus far we have removed most of the traces of a foreign idiom in the writer's English; now we think it may interest the reader to see what English style was compassed by this energetic German gentleman in his solitary cell. The rest of the narrative is printed as it comes to us.

When there was spoken of the marriage of the prince-regent, people believed that the political prisoners would be set free at this opportunity; but, the Princess of Prussia being very young, the effectuation trained much too long. At last, in the autumn, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, my wife received a hint, that I was to be freed at a certain day, and she had already sent her luggage to the railway, when she received a telegraphical despatch, that it was no time yet, and that she might stay a little longer in Berlin.

It was the second October in the morning, when I was interrupted in a drawing by the visit of the director, who announced me my deliverance, and the presence of my wife in Bruchsal. I was glad, of course, but I had waited too long for this moment, to feel it with such force as would have been the case two years before.

Nevertheless, I stept into the carriage with a thankful heart, and when we drove along the streets to the hotel, there were trees, flowers, carriages, horses, women and children! I heard merry voices instead of the whining of the organ, and saw smiling and compassionate faces greeting us on our way.

In the hôtel of the Poste we were received with a hearty welcome by the brave landlady, and led into her best room, where stood upon the table the finest flower-

bouquet money could purchase in Bruchsal, a gift of the landlady to me.

When dinner came—what a wonder! My wife was amused and touched at my exclamations. A tablecloth—what a luxury! A fork! I had not seen a fork since six years. I had appropriated to me a large pin, which I wanted formerly for my cobbler-work, and which I used instead of a fork, and my plate was a round bit of board, which I brought with me as a keepsake. I had forgot how to use such things as knife and fork at once.

What a pleasure to drink out of a glass again, for even my bit of wine I used to drink out of a spare bird-glass. The whole dinner was a chain of agreeable surprises, for there were so great many familiar things I had neither seen nor tasted for so long a time—as plates, decanters, butter, fruit, tea, coffee, and fine havannahs.

I would have liked a walk in the environs of Bruchsal, only to look at my prison; but I did not, for it would have caused, perhaps, some disagreeableness to the director; thus I contented myself with walking in the garden of the hotel.

The other day we went by the railway to Francfort—my wife, myself, and my dear little companions (my four canary-birds), who wondered much at the great many people they saw everywhere. The journey was very fatiguant to me, and I felt uncomfortable, for everywhere people stared at me with amazement and pity. No wonder; for I looked like a walking corpse, and my great excitement and vivacity made my appearance rather more painful. It must have been indeed very striking; for when we arrived in the house of my brother-in-law in Francfort, there was a servant that had been in the house of my father-in-law when my wife was yet a maid, on seeing me she was so much shocked and grieved at the alteration of my features that she ran away and threw herself weeping upon the ground.

The society of my old friends and all these things I heard and saw excited me still more; and when I met an old friend, a physician, he cautioned me, and forbade me positively to go to a play, for he said that a single great excitement might produce at once what six years of solitary confinement had not done—to wit, madness! When I met, the other day, a very old and dear friend, who had shown to me much kindness since twenty years, I could not speak, and sobbed at his breast like a little child.

It was a curious sensation I had in the throat, produced by much speaking, for I was not used to it; and even in hearing I found difficulty. But this was not the effect of any deficiency in the ear, but only that of my not being used to hear speaking.

Now I heard, for the first time, that my old mother was dead since four years. My wife would not write it to me, and sent me always her greetings. My stepfather, who was deceased also a few months before, and of the death of other dear persons I heard also only then.

PERFECTLY CONTENTED.

After dinner, sitting at peace in my lodgings in a quiet London street, I take a pen instead of a cigar, and let my thoughts wander at will. The brass band at the corner does not irritate me. I accept London life as it is, and love it the more for a tendency to ponder over what it has been. My childhood was indeed spent where streams ripple and birds sing; but the life of an elderly bachelor within the human wilderness of this great town—I say it, though my dinner has been very ill-cooked by the landlady—is, to me, one of unalloyed contentment.

As for the landlady, I am quite sure, from the sourness of her temper, that she has had many heavy troubles to endure. She is a widow, and has had, therefore, to bear what I suppose must be the most enduring of distresses; and I know, upon the best authority, for she has often herself told me, that she once was rich. What can be more natural than that one born to a happier sphere should not be expert in the business of the kitchen? Why should I take offence at her misfortune? It is a privilege allowed to me, by punctual payments and an uncomplaining habit, to do something towards the alleviation of her burden in this world. I have no sorrows of my own to bear; why should I shake my shoulders restlessly if others lean upon me sometimes with the weight of theirs? For example: I know well that if my landlady bought for herself tea out of her scanty means, it would be four-shilling congou, and that of this she would allow herself only the weakest brew. How unfit would be such a beverage for one so much in need of cheering as she surely is, since I have known her to seek solace even in inebriation! It contents me, then—it pleases me—to know that she has so much delicacy as to take unasked from my tea-caddy what is much more proper for her; and so, by a tacit understanding, the begetting of which I think must be an almost unexampled instance of a woman's tact, anticipate my wish, and obviate the pain it would be to us both if all my little daily free gifts were to be sought by an act on her side of humiliating beggary. Lately, it occurred to me that the four-and-eight-penny black tea which I had for some time been using, though well enough for me, was but poor matter to make presents of. I therefore made up my mind to supply the caddy with the best young hyson, and am glad to see that it gives satisfaction; for my tea now goes much faster than ever.

Acutely as I remember country sights and sounds, and often as my memory reverts to

them, I own that they are not so various or so suggestive as the sights and sounds of London. Linnæus made a flower clock: there is a clockwork in our street of a more wonderful sort, that never once runs down. Early in the morning, if the wind be favourable, I can hear the striking of a real work-day clock—that of the railway; and the key-notes of its bells often remind me, as I lie under the blanket, of the chime of an old cathedral near which I was born. With eyes half-opened, I begin to dream of nooks in rocky woods, huge mossy oaks and ash-trees overhanging a clear river; of deep glens and bubbling springs, and streams rattling about great stones; of locks, and weirs, and ancient Norman shrines, all lying within earshot of that old cathedral bell. Then I hear, even in London, the cocks crowing, and sometimes the lowing of the kine, the bleat of sheep and lambs, that pass under my window. Factory bells sound in the distance; and I hear the whistle of the locomotive, with its rush of steam, that in a very sleepy mood stands for the distant roar of the sea beating upon rocks and shingles.

At seven o'clock, there arrive in our street two or three criers of milk, and many voices clamouring Four bunches a-penny, watercresses! By the watercresses every sleeper is awakened, and some neighbours, I believe, awake to grumble—not remembering that at seven it is time to rise, and little thinking of the pleasant rills near Rickmansworth and Watford; of the picturesque groups that were employed betimes in collecting and packing this favourite herb for the London market; of the anxious crowd of hungry people flocking from unhappy courts and sickly dens to Hungerford or Covent Garden, or elsewhere, with little capitals to invest; and then of the hard work these people go through, with their little shops upon their heads, before they earn a day's bread and a sordid lodging.

Between seven o'clock and nine, Watercresses! Dried Haddocks! Fine Bloaters, fine young Yarmouth! Sweep! and Milk, yeo! are never out of hearing. During a part of the time, the attention of the street is absorbed by two comic milkmen, who come one of them at half-past seven, and one at half-past eight. The first comes with cows and cans, and cries an oration of some length about "New milk from the kee-ow! Milk it in your own jugs—milk it in your own jugs, all hot, piping hot, new milk from the kee-ow!" The other addresses us concerning "Railway milk! Railway milk! Railway milk! Milk—MILK—MILK! All milk and no water, pretty maids, pretty maids! All milk and no water, no water, pretty maids! Only threepence! Threepence a quart! Threepence—threepence! Only threepence a quart, pretty maids!" So I think, during the half-hour occupied by this pastoral song, of Corydon and Damon, and declare to myself that London is not such a work-a-day place, after all, but that we too have something in our streets about the pipe and reed.

At nine o'clock the hour is struck, all down the street by the postman's knock; we have also Dust-hoy! and a man with a wheel, who when he is not shouting, is grinding saws and scissors. There is also a pleasant clamour of the children on the way to school, who play at leapfrog and chuck-farthing outside my window. The tic-tic-tic-tic of the German clockmaker, who passes about this time, and the commencement of the morning calls from persons who make offers in confidential tones, of envelopes at a penny a dozen, or request the purchase of fancy articles in the missionary interest; street minstrels knocking for pennies; the one-horsed organ battery, or brain-thrasher, opening its fire; rhubarb, twopence a bundle! Clo-clo! Any ornaments for your fire-stoves! Organs, Ethiopians, the Indian tom-tom, and Mackerel alive O! with many like ingredients in the busy hum of life, keep us alive and warn us, nine o'clock having struck, that the labour of another day is well begun. Nine o'clock in the evening is at last announced by the cry of Bee-ar! and the clash of pots. After that hour we have nothing to look for but organs and brass-bands till midnight. Grant that I like, better than all these sounds, the rustle of the cornfields, and the murmur of the river Wye, yet is there not in these town-murmurings the voice that ought to engage most of my attention? Shall the men, women, and children who are all but homeless, not labour and toil in the streets to which they are remitted, because I desire rest in my adjoining snuggery? Shall they not cry aloud for honest bread, because my ears are nice? I would much rather stop the clock than stop the street-cries. I respect the struggling industry they represent; I hear the oaths, I see the cruelty, I suffer from the habitual dishonesty of these hucksters. Their quarts are pints; their pounds are half-pounds: but what of that?

I am very much amused to think what a good world this must be, as it is now to most of us, when Londoners can find no worse tyranny to complain of than the being ground under the barrels of the foreign organ-boys. When you hear much of small troubles, you may suppose that there can be no experience of great ones; and, indeed, I quite believe that habitual grumblers are among the happiest folk upon earth. What would the complainant of to-day say to a return of the old time when London was ground out of patience by an English king, or even by worshipful men, sons of its bosom, banded for midnight robbery and murder in its pitch-dark streets, and able to offer sums equal in our money to five or six thousand pounds as a bribe for escape when they were taken?

The organ-boys levy penny contributions

on the City. I grant that. But run back to the days of King Henry the Third, who on one occasion, wanting cash, extorted from the citizens five thousand marks, saying that they could not object to giving as much to their own king as they had just given to the King of France; who, on another occasion, took from the citizens one thousand five hundred marks as fine for permitting Walter Buckerel to live in London after he had been banished from the kingdom, though Buckerel had been pardoned by the king's own letters patent before he returned to his country; who, in the year next following, required another thousand marks; who, in another year, talked about raising money on his plate and jewels, but remembered that the London people were "an immense treasure of themselves," and bled them by granting to the Abbot of Westminster leave to hold an annual fair in Tothill Fields, ordering every citizen to cease from trade during the fifteen days that the fair lasted, which order was to be bought off only by a heavy payment. The same king —who was indeed one of the fine old London nuisances, all of the olden time—begged of the town new year's gifts and Christmas-boxes, and enforced additions to them when they were not large enough. When Londoners began to escape into the country, the king fearing depopulation, promised them a rest, and chose for a time only the Italian bankers in the town for victims, then again touched the purses of the whole community, and when it proved restive revived Tothill Fair. In those happy times, a prisoner having escaped by accident, the citizens were fined three thousand marks. The sheriffs not having levied distresses with sufficient vigour to secure the payment of the tax called the Queen's gold, they were imprisoned, and the City was deprived of privileges which it recovered only by the payment of four thousand marks. There were held folkmotes in St. Paul's Cathedral, and great fines had to be paid by those men who stood forward on the side of liberty. In one year, while the royal nuisance thus afflicted London, there arose a famine in the town so great that men were to be seen in the streets fighting for carrion and dead dogs, and drinking the wash erewhile given to the hogs. When, at last, London made a bold stand against these afflictions and marched out to fight the king's army in Lambeth Fields, it brought upon itself more losses and demands, especially a fine of sixty thousand marks—quittance for which, however, was to be had on payment of twenty thousand for prompt payment.

We don't like to hear women shouting at the full stretch of their lungs, "Mackerel alive-O!" before we are fairly out of bed of mornings. Well; shall we go back, then, to the good old days of laws against forestalling and regrating, which allowed nobody to secure fish the moment it was caught, or country chickens as they came into the town, but forbade any huckster or dealer to purchase anything of the sort before three o'clock in the afternoon, after the lord king and the king's servants had purchased what they needed? "And if they who have bought fish shall come after three o'clock let them not sell that day, but let them sell to-morrow morning." Little chance then of hearing in a street like mine at nine, A.M., the cry of Mackerel, alive O! No doubt the Jews were not so noisy with the cry of Clo'! when on a hint of the coinage having been clipped, two hundred and eighty London Jews could be in one day seized and executed. No doubt, the sweep's cry was faint or unknown in days when our rulers took care of our health by prohibiting the use of coal. As I sit here over a coal fire after dinner, it seems to me that our street cries are notes of liberty.

After my dinner! Busy with the pen, I did not hear the entrance of our little servant of all work—a sweet child whose sorrow it must be that circumstances will not suffer her to be clean. She has been here, however, for I see a document now lying on my table which was not there half an hour ago, and upon it I see, executed in soot over "Mrs. Caddypick's respectful compliments," Matilda Slutt, her mark. This document contains the evidence that I have dined, that I have enjoyed liberal repasts of every kind not once only during the past week. It always is produced on Saturday, and at a time when I am happiest. The sight of it is welcome, for it abounds in testimony to the thoughtful kindness of my landlady.

It is astonishing to note sometimes how dexterous a woman is in flattery, what subtle ways she finds of making a man happy in himself. I am, let me own, something dyspeptic, and always play a shamefully bad knife and fork. I cannot help this, and it would serve no good purpose, it would only make me painfully nervous and alarmed as to my bodily condition, if my weekly bills reproved me with the failings of my appetite, and told me in stern black and white, that I am not a robust old man, and that my term of life must be drawing to a close. My landlady knows this, and, to please me, has hit upon one of the most original and exquisite devices I have ever noticed in a world full of kind deeds. She keeps up, with a gravity dictated by the utmost delicacy, in all these importunate little documents that must be read, the agreeable suggestion that I am an eminently healthy and a hungry man. She will not grant that I am unable to eat a leg of mutton at two sittings, or to get through a pound of butter at a breakfast. In another way her little document consoles me. Owing to my dyspeptic state the butter often appears to me salt and rancid, and the juiciest rump-steak will eat like a tough piece of what is, I believe, called skirt. My bill satisfies me upon all such points by the assurance that no

expense has been spared to procure for me the very best of everything.

I seem to be extravagant in vegetables. That is well. I have read how, in the year after the battle of Nevill's Cross, all leprous persons were commanded to depart from London. I might very possibly have been a leper had I lived in the days when vegetables formed no part of English diet; but, since that day, as the consumption of greens and potatoes has increased, leprosy and many another foul disease has vanished. I am glad to see that, like a civilised and happy man, I eat abundantly of vegetables.

My meat account is heavy. Well; they were barbarous and plaguy times when meat used to be cheap. So many people died of a great plague in London once, that all sorts of provisions were to be had by the survivors at such rates as these—to make them seem the more surprising, I say nothing of increase in the worth of money since that day when wheat, at a fair price, was two shillings a quarter. The best fed ox was to be had for four shillings, the best cow for a shilling, the best heifer or steer for sixpence, the best wether for fourpence, the best ewe for threepence, a fat pig for fivepence, and a lamb for twopence. When prices rose again, they were still apparently much lower than they now are; but there could have been no great store of food when it was thought necessary to ordain—as it was once ordained in London—that no vintner should allow guests to eat in his house other food than bread and wine, and that nobody should spend more than two shillings, including wine and beer, but that a servant's expenditure should not exceed eightpence.

Now I must needs go on recollecting about dinner. In the year one, five, three, one, Richard Rose, cook to the Bishop of Rochester, was boiled in a copper in Smithfield. He had poisoned sixteen people with porridge meant to kill his master.

At a feast given at Norwich in the time of Queen Elizabeth, sweet water and perfumes cost fourpence, sixteen oranges cost two shillings, two gallons of white wine the same; there were also sack, malmsey, and muscadine, and the whole cost of the entertainment was one pound eighteen shillings and a penny. Against this we may set a dinner given by the City of London to King George the Second, at which there were upwards of one thousand dishes eaten, and there were drunk three thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine bottles of divers sorts of wine. The king when he left gave a thousand pounds to the sheriff for poor debtors, the dinner having cost nearly five thousand. After all, Mrs. Caddypick does not run up my weekly bills so very royally, and the good appetite with which she flatters me, is not equal to that of the festive citizen, whose dinner eaten at the Bridewell Hospital a hundred years ago, was noted and recorded by a guest who would have been better employed if he had used his mouth more, and eyes less. Mr. —— consumed for the first course: two plates of mock turtle, some salmon trout, venison, ham, and chicken. For the second course,—some goose and green peas, cold lobster, hot marrow pudding, codlins, tart creamed, some prawns, one small custard. For dessert, — some blancmange, two jellies, one plate of raspberries thoroughly soaked in wine, two slices of a melon, and some cheese. When the waiters came to clear the table he told them angrily that they were a confounded set of scavengers, and that he would knock some of them down if they did not get him a dish of ice-cream, adding withall, "It is desperate hard a body cannot dine at these here places in comfort."

I see as I look out of window a fine lady whose expansive flounce covers much pavement, and remember to have heard it said even by my landlady, whose skirts hang in thin folds, that the invention of balloon flounces now in vogue must have proceeded from an idiot. I see no objection to the present fashions. In the good old times, indeed, when ladies wore the great and stately farthingales, gentlemen wore what an old chronicler calls "verdingale breeches." If we fall back on the past, following the lead of the other sex, and have to wear clothes thickly stuffed with wool or bran, I only hope that the wool-casing will not come into use during summer weather. In cold weather, especially when streets are slippery, the padded dress will, I confess—to my old bones, at any rate—be welcome. Only, I shall be heedful to avoid the mischance that befel the fashionable gentleman in a brannew stuffed falloda, who was pleased at the laughter he awakened in a party of young ladies, whom he entertained with animated talk and gesture. He did not perceive till he was totally collapsed that he had been offering his chaff to the assembled company through a hole torn in his falloda by a nail in the chair on which he had been sitting. I think, however, that we shall not overlook modern improvements, and am quite sure that the casing of the male population of this town, like the population of the other sex, in air-balloons, will tend much to the benefit of the community. To be knocked down and run over; to be crushed in a collision on the railway; to fall down an area, or even from a fourth-storey window upon area spikes, will then no longer be a cause of death, or any more than the most trivial inconvenience. Some wise ideas we may recover from the past, and this, no doubt, is one. I wonder greatly at the ridicule it is encountering.

"*Familiar in their Mouths as* HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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FROM PARIS TO CHELMSFORD.

FROM the Seine to the Chelm—from imperial Paris to a little county town in rural, calf-fattening, corn-growing, fox-hunting Essex—is a long stride. Yet we took such a stride the other day, and not without making notes. We have compared the two places; and, strange as it may sound, rural Chelmsford had not the worst of the comparison in what the French would call the spécialité that caused our journey.

The palace of the Champs Elysées at Paris was turned, the other day, into a palace of agricultural industry, and all the world was invited in the most flattering terms to send to it the best specimens of cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry; and the most ingenious implements for cultivating, sowing, gathering, and realising the fruits of a farm. This invitation was no hollow compliment, but was accompanied with terms of Imperial liberality: the barriers of customs' houses were thrown open for the occasion, and every beast and every machine presented at the French frontier was duly armed with agricultural passports, was entitled to a free passage to Paris, to free board and lodging as long as the Exhibition lasted, and to a return-ticket to the frontier when it was over.

So handsome an invitation, coupled with the prospect of prizes of money and medals in astounding profusion, brought together such a crowd of exhibitors as were never before gathered, and probably never will be assembled again. The herds and shepherds were sufficient to constitute a language of Babel. There were Danes and Schleswig-Holsteiners, Dutch and Saxons, Swiss and Tyrolese, Austrians, Bavarians, Bohemians, Gallicians and Hungarians; French patois from Bretagne to Auvergne, from Flanders to the Garonne, mixed with English provincialism of every variety from Yorkshire to Devonshire; with Highlander Scotch and Lowlander Scotch; and all sorts of Irish to be heard between Galway and Dublin Bay. Moreover, two thousand animals were to represent the beef, milk, cheese, mutton, wool, pork sausages, and bristles of continental Europe.

About the superiority of the decorative part of the French Exhibition there was not the slightest doubt. With a palace for a cattle-yard, a nation's funds to draw upon, and French taste to adorn, a picture was made up worth the whole price of an opera-ticket—even to those indifferent to the great food question. Grass, flowers and shrubs all "a-growing all a-blowing," fountains murmuring into basins, where salmon, trout, carp, perch, eels, and crayfish of gigantic size, suggested cutlets, matelote à la marimère, and potage à la bisque; above, banners waving with golden bees, stars, stripes, union-jacks, crescents, crosses, eagles, single and double; below, all manner of horned beasts; adding to the sights the sounds of lowing and bleating in many languages: now a blast from a Tyrolese horn, then a bang-bang from the iron kettles which in Switzerland pass for bells; while, sprinkled among an ebbing and flowing crowd of visitors such as usually fill the Boulevards on fine summer evenings, were priest-like Bretonnes with vast coal-scuttle hats, close curly black hair, yellow oval visages, and long black tunics; Tyrolean dairy-men with white stockings, green breeches, short jackets, enormous calves, and steeple-crowned hats; Swiss ditto, in yellow leather dittos; French veal-breeders in blue blouses and necklaces of prize medals; and Hungarians in hussar jackets and white linen Turkish trousers. The Highlanders in Tartan kilts, carried away the palm from all for picturesqueness of costume, for strength and for expression half-savage half-soft, as Mr. Moore once sang.

The Schleswigers—from whom we derive an ancestry of Anglesmen, and who continue famous for horses and butter—sent the d'Angeln breed of small red cows; which, in a way we need some patient historian to trace, were transplanted, at some remote period, to or from North Devon and to or from Saxony. Not that the Schleswig full-uddered specimens would produce any of the famous Devon beef without three or four generations of cultivation. Still, we see the relationship in the same form and colour, moderated—by constant domestic intercourse between the herd and his cow, by good grass, and by warm winter stables—into an expression very different from the wild, curly-coated denizens of the Quantock Hills, or the climbers of the Exmoor combes. The d'Angeln are sadly

angular, but are free-givers of butter-producing milk. An alliance between one of our curly-coated North Devons and one of these patient little red cows, would enable the Agricultural Society of Schleswig to add first-class oxen to the exportations which have grown into importance, and have found their way to Hull, Grimsby, and Lowestoff since Denmark was fortunate enough to enter into a railroad and steamboat alliance with Peto, and Company.

Holland comes next, with her great, long-legged, large-stomached cows, black and white, red-white, and all white or all black, which are familiar to us in Cuyp's landscapes; they are fed in summer on the rich, coarse grass of the polders; stabled in winter, and supplied with grains of true schiedam; currycombed and made cleanly to an extent which nothing less well taught than a Dutch cow could endure. Here we have milk again; but this time milk for cheese—the famous cannon-ball Dutch cheese that rolls all round the world with detriment only to weak digestions. On Dutch feeding, these huge cows fill pail after pail of a thin quality of milk; but they break the heart of an English feeder, and eat and eat and eat, without accumulating on their bones either fat or flesh. Therefore are they favourites in town dairies, where quantity not quality is the object; where the milking operation is performed thrice a day, and where food is supplied without measuring quantities. But, a Norfolk or a Lincoln farmer would as soon see a boa constrictor, as a Dutch heifer or ox in his winter yard, feeding among his Scots, his Devons, his Herefords, and his Shorthorns. In Paris, indeed, it is not always safe to have a Dutch cow; for, on one occasion the officer who, armed with a scientific instrument, protects the Parisians from the dilu-ent produce of the cow-with-the-iron-tail, dipped into the pail of the unfortunate possessor of a Dutch cow (the best pail-filler in his shippon), and found an unlawful ten per cent. of water. Thereupon followed a procès verbal and a fine; for, red tape, not confined to England, held that cows had no business to give more than the quantity of water in milk which is allowed by municipal ordonnance.

Leaving the huge, parti-coloured, hungry cattle of Dutchland, with their admirable dairymen, we skip the Rhine provinces. We turn with pleasure to Switzerland; where, with the help of watch manufactures, emigrating labour, immigrating capital, and summer harvests from travellers in search of picturesque emotions, the people have been able to carry to perfection the only system of stock and dairy culture possible in such a country, and have not been dragged down to the level of the peasant proprietors and metayers of the south of France, or the potato-fed boors of Germany.

The Swiss department of the Exhibition was beautifully got up, for very good reasons. Several eminent cow-dealers were there with their stock—the Andersons and Quartermains of bovine Swissland, besides others, who exhibited for honour and glory, prizes and profit. All the associates of the Ranz des Vaches were assembled under the Parisian roof, except the mountains; these included milk, butter, and cheese, but no signs of beef in the English sense: that is to say (to use the words of the Devon breeder when explaining the merits of his favourites to her Majesty), there were too much threepenny and not enough ninepenny. Indeed, we doubt if there were any ninepenny at all. There were the cowherds, most of them very ugly fellows, not the least like our notions of William Tell in fancy costumes on fête days; there were the nicely-carved one-legged stools, with straps for carrying them across the milker's shoulders when he travels up to the luxuriant grassy valleys in summer time; there were buckets, carved too, and inlaid with brass and all sorts of ornaments, fashioned out of horn and wood by the ingenious cowkeepers in their winter evenings. There were belts of leather a hand broad, embroidered in red, yellow, blue, cowrie shells and brass-work, fit for a bishop's tomb, with mottos in Swiss, German, or patois, to these were suspended huge bells; the ornament in summer of the bull who leads the herd, or of the cow who honourably distinguishes herself by giving an extra half-dozen quarts a day. But, a British invasion is conquering the land of Tell; and, according to the opinion of the Swiss commissioner, in a few years Berne and Fribourg, and all the dappled races, will have contracted British alliances and have sacrificed their national independence to prejudices in favour of roast and boiled.

Switzerland owns and gives name to one breed, the Schwitz, which is the type of a bovine variety that we may trace throughout Europe—one of the most picturesque and one of the best dairy breeds, but, in no manner, a beef-maker. We seem to see a relation of the Schwitz in a dark dun Alderney; the same fine, deer-like head, the same dark-tipped horns and bushy black-tipped tail, fine muscular legs, full bounteous-looking udder; both have the look, in colour and form of a wild animal, yet both have a perfectly amiable and domesticated expression of countenance. The true Schwitz has a dark line, gradually melting to a fawn colour, down the back; is much larger and more active than the Alderney; and would seem perfectly in keeping with the landscape of some northern rugged wooded park of vast extent. You may follow the breed along the Alps under various names—sometimes smaller, sometimes a little lighter in colour; occasionally varying to grey—up to the Styrian mountains; and there you find yourself in full dispute with the German agricultural professors, who claim the honours of abori-

ginality; not without good show of reason; for the Murzthal, is even more beautiful, and more original in dun and grey, with reddish-tipped ears, than our favourite Schwitz. These three breeds—Alderney, Schwitz, and Murzthal, with their sub-varieties, Oberhasli, Undertewald Pinzgau, and Montafon, cannot be improved by any cross on this side of the water. Their destiny is to make, not good beef, but rich butter.

In the neglect of meat lies the chief difference between British and foreign agriculture. Under all circumstances, meat is the ultimate and early destination of our live stock. It is the object of which our stock owners never lose sight. On the continent, horned cattle are valued for the dairy, for their hides, and for their usefulness in the cart or the plough. Even milch-cows are put into harness. The Comte de Jourdonnet, a French agricultural critic, contemplates with horror the English bovine alliance, lest it should, corrupting the French docility, give French cattle a sort of Bourbonite obesity, unpleasing to the Parisian table; and, in sacrificing oxen and cows to the butcher, make them above their business as drawers of ploughs and carts: a very unnecessary fear, the result of the prejudice that dreads ploughboys becoming too learned. Foreign sheep are, or rather were until lately, considered only in a woolly point of view; chops, cutlets, and gigots having been secondary considerations; haunches and saddles unknown. As for pigs, although lard is an export, there seem to be millions bred for the sole use of saddlers and brush-makers, in defiance of all established rules for manufacturing streaky flitches, or of that fat bacon of which a lump enclosed in the heart of a cabbage, bound in a net, and properly boiled, makes a dish fit for an emperor.

Although in England particularly in Herefordshire, Devonshire, and Sussex—oxen are used to plough; although in one county you find great dairies of the hardy red Devons; in another of the delicate Ayrshire, and more frequently cattle of no particular breed but well dashed with the flesh-gathering shorthorn — here making butter, there making cheese, and, near the great cities, supplying milk and cream only; yet, all the varieties are specially bred and fed with the view of making large, round, juicy joints. This object is so well attained by dint of years of pains, that the roan, white-nosed, half-bred cow, not quite so thick in the hide as a rhinoceros, after a few years' duty at such a dairyfarm as Friern Manor, near London, or Liscard, near Liverpool, is able, with a few months use and feeding, to meet the notabilities of the London cattle market in a condition of velvety plumpness that would put the best ox in the Parisian abattoirs to the blush. Such are the results of proper breeding and careful education.

One row of stalls given up to Hungary and Gallicia, under the charge of herds as handsomely and more usefully costumed than our cavalry, presented an idea of the original condition in which agriculture was left after the avatar of the Huns. A pair of buffalos and a leash of white, lean, long-legged, active, elk-like cattle, with monstrous spiral horns were there to represent a country; where, for want of roads or markets, flocks and herds, in a half-wild unimproved state, are watched by horsemen and shepherds, scarcely more civilised than the plaided highlanders who bred black cattle and levied black mail on the lowlands a hundred and fifty years ago.

In the present condition of Hungary and Gallicia these white cattle are invaluable. They live on anything, and trot along a wild moor track as fast as horses, where no horses could go. The Austrian professor who wrote a report on these strange oriental beasts,—which doubtless came with the Hungarians from Asia—is eloquent on the flavour of their flesh. No doubt, what there is of it, is excellent; but there must be considerably less on a fatted ox of this Pustenvich breed, than on a well-fed red-deer. Yet these were, to the student of agricultural history, perhaps the most interesting classes in the exhibition. They were cattle-marks, to coin a word, showing where a rich unbroken wilderness began.

For, if we stepped away a few yards we came to the Scotch department; where, peacefully feeding, were to be found long rows of hornless black cattle, the polled Angus—square solid cubes of flesh without dint or angle—exciting the loud admiration of French and all foreign breeders and butchers, to whom the race-Angus was as new, as the white antelope-horned Pustenvich.

Few were able to understand how a grand lesson in politics and political economy is to be learned from those polled cattle and their fellow countrymen, the shaggy-coated, long-horned West-highlanders. A hundred and fifty years ago, the lands and the population among which these perfect specimens of beefmaking cattle are now bred, were in a condition more barbarous than any part of Hungary and Gallicia. Such angular and large-boned cattle; bred, fed, starved, on the mountains and damp rush-covered valleys, were originally stunted in size and shape, by cold and hunger. The people—without commerce, without roads, isolated by language from the Lowlands, divided among themselves by a thousand feuds—scratched the soil with a rude spade, or a ruder plough, to grow a few oats near their miserable huts; and, on these, with the produce of lean cattle sold at lowland fairs, and the salted flesh of a worn-out cow, or sheep, or goat, they managed to exist with the help of salmon from the stream, and deer from the forest. But, by degrees, the influence of a free and stable government was extended to the most remote parts of Scotland. The sword of

Culloden was followed by the roads of General Wade. Laws, justly and firmly administered, gave tranquillity, opened up markets, and created commerce; and thus men of intelligence and capital were tempted to settle in regions that were considered then, as barbarous as the American backwoods. The highland proprietors — whose strength had once been counted in men, and afterwards in the cattle which they sent wholesale (as Hungarian and Australian proprietors now do) to distant fairs—imitated the southern landlords, and sought tenants who would pay in money instead of in kind. With such tenants came the implements of the south, and the southern notions of improvement in live stock. The principles which had been applied to English cattle, were applied to Scotch cattle with a degree of success which has long been known in the English markets. In sheep the changes were as great as in cattle. The original black-faced highland sheep of which a singular parallel exists in the Hungarian upright spiral-horned breed, was improved in shape, and spread over mountains, where previously black cattle starved; and the black sheep itself was superseded, on superior pastures, by the more profitable but less hardy Cheviot. Representatives of these highland tribes and colonists were all in Paris, the results of large well-cultivated farms, of great crops of turnips, oats, and even wheat; representing the capital and the implements; the work of the intelligent farmers and labourers; a thriving commerce in agricultural produce, and an enormous consumption of manufactures in districts, which, during the "forty-five," the Court of Versailles justly considered as the miserable haunts of warlike savages.

Are the Hungarian, Gallician and Bohemian proprietors wise enough to study the history of the rise of Scotch agriculture?—Will the Austrian government learn that something more than an importation of live stock is required to turn millions of acres of waste into productive, tax-paying farms? Such profitable transformations have never been made without liberty of speech, liberty of religion, and liberty of trade, nor without liberty of communication and fair competition.

We did not linger in the British department of the Paris Exhibition, because it was an old familiar story. It was pleasant to see among the sturdy, tall, broad-shouldered, brown-faced visitors from England, Scotland, and Ireland, hale, hearty, iron-grey Watson of Keilor, enjoying the triumph of the polled Angus, which he found forty years ago the cotter's cow; and which, by following out the principles of Bakewell and Collings, he has made the prime favourite of the best of old judges—the London butchers. In the same time he has helped and succeeded in naturalising the Short horn and the South down in the north of Scotland; and has welcomed every great chemical and mechanical improvement.

The intelligent observer would remark of the British department that the progress of improvement had reduced British breeds considered worth cultivating, to a few which had superseded a number of local favourites; and next, that British farmers, unlike the French, did not adhere to provincial breeds, but indifferently fed the best they could buy according to market price. Even Ireland renounced her nationality—a most hopeful sign; and, while sending a few of the beautiful Kerrys (one of the most elegant of the small breeds), relied chiefly on choice specimens of Short horn cattle, and Leicester and South Down sheep. The Short horns astonished those who did not know that, for some years past, Ireland has been supplying the English cattle fairs with an annually increasing number of choice animals of this most profitable breed; which, in its European crosses, makes milk, butter, and cheese; which, in Australia, sturdily strides away with plough or dray, and which, under all circumstances, readily, early, and economically fattens for the butcher. Here it is worth remembering that less than a century ago, English cattle-breeders were up in arms against a free trade with Ireland, lest it should let in the native long-horned, thick-hided Irish breed to compete with our graziers; the wool-growers being equally jealous of Irish sheep. One of Burke's crimes with the intelligent electors of Bristol (whose jealousy of foreigners endures to this day) was his support of free trade in Irish live stock. Now, our farmers would be badly off without lean Irish cattle to turn their straw and roots into manure, meat, and fat cattle for the Liverpool and Manchester markets.

The great difference between the British and the French department, was, that the latter exhibited animals of perplexing variety of breeds, none of them economical beef makers; the best of them—if we are to believe French agricultural writers—being confined to particular localities, cannot be transplanted from their native pastures; while the British forwarded prime specimens of the sires and dams, the ewes and rams, of the beef and mutton to be found in our butchers' shops. The French have plenty of fine dairy cattle. French butter is second only to Flemish. Among the large French breeds the finest is the Normande, if it is a breed which may be doubled. These large-boned animals, fed on the fat pastures of their native province, fill the dairy-maid's pail, and, as oxen after ploughing honestly for an unlimited number of years, are eventually made into what the French call beef. By thirty years' constant care, without cross-breeding, it is probable that the Normande could be made a good animal; but, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that landed property is divided in France with every generation, and if not

divided, mortgaged. Count de Tourdonnet in the Révue Contemporaire informs us that the Normande, the best of the French breeds, cannot be transplanted, because it requires better grass than most districts afford. But, in England, our root-cultivation has made all countries independent of grass. This observation is the key-note to the condition of agriculture in France. For a hundred years we have been raising our style of cultivation to keep pace with our improved live stock. In France we find this leading agricultural writer asking for cattle able to sink down to the level of bad cultivation.

Next to the Normandes come the red Flamande, very like the large white-faced beast that is the pride of Herefordshire and Shropshire; also good dairy cattle, and slow makers of beef. Then there were the white Charolais, a picturesque large breed, resembling Short horns, before fifty years' pains had given them their present perfect form. The Charolais give no milk, and not enough beef, but are bred round the city of Tours for the plough, and fatted when worn out. The best we can say of them is, that they are very improvable, and that, allied with the Durham John Bull, they will give more milk more beef and will plough not a whit less vigorously than the latter.

After the artist's favourites, the white Charolais, there followed the pretty little Bretonnes—elegant deer-like creatures, proper pets for villa paddock, invaluable as the poor man's one cow, to be fed on roadsides or bare moor, tethered or watched by a child. They remind one of the Kerrys in colour and size; but are more elegant, and that is the highest praise they deserve—pretty pets, out of place where progress is the order of the day. Then followed a long list of varieties called after their native provinces, Gasconne, Garronnaise, Agennaise, such as we may find in an ancient English cattle picture-book, published before a few choice breeds had extinguished local prejudices, and driven Long horns and polled Norfolks into the rank of provincial curiosities not worth cultivating in a national point of view. Among them were dun and buffalo-coloured, dark-muzzled, aboriginal-looking bulls, of a breed, no doubt found by Cæsar when he invaded Gaul, and used by Charlemagne in his conquests; picturesque as the Schwitz, but giving no spare milk, and even less beef than the mountaineers. Nevertheless they are prized for their sturdy draught qualities, and they may be seen admirably depicted in the Charcoal Burner's Charette, painted by Rosa Bonheur.

To follow to the outside tents of the Exhibition, the sheep and pigs, would be too tedious and technical a task. There, electoral Saxony triumphed with her pure merinos, the result of an hereditary idea, whose fleece is almost golden in value; a single pen of seven sheep was valued at seven thousand pounds sterling. For a century the reigning Saxon family have cherished this hereditary idea of perfecting the merino. There, too, were specimens of the same breed from the estates of the Hungarian Esterhazys,—very good merinos, but the best rams scarcely averaging more than fifty pounds a-piece in price. Within sight, were the pens of the English Southdowns, improved by one tenant farmer (living on the farm of a landlord under whom his father and grandfather had also lived) until he was able, in Paris, to refuse five hundred pounds for one ram. It was Esterhazy who, when Coke of Holkham showed him his breeding flock of perhaps five hundred ewes, and asked him how many sheep he had, replied, with pardonable orientalism, that he did not know how many sheep he possessed, but that he had about five hundred shepherds. To the non-agricultural, the Hungarian prince would seem to have had the best of the reply; for, it conveyed the idea of something like two hundred thousand sheep; but the Norfolk flocks are only parts of a great agricultural machine; they tread and fertilise land otherwise barren, prepare the way for great crops of corn, and yield an annual profit in meat and wool of something like twenty shillings each. The Hungarian flocks represent nothing but great plains of natural grasses for summer feed, and hay for winter feed; on which, as an average, they yield a profit of something like five shillings a-year to the owner of the sheep and the land. Thus we may venture to say that a thousand Norfolk Southdowns represent more wealth than ten thousand, and more rent than one hundred thousand, Hungarian merinos.

As long as sheep were only valuable for their wool, and only eaten when their four-year-old teeth had begun to wear out, the merino travelled steadily northward from Spain even to Sweden; attained perfection in Saxony; and destroyed the mutton of hundreds of native breeds. Australian colonisation in its turn has, within twenty years, however, destroyed the value of the inferior merino wool, previously grown by those who could not give Saxon care and skill to their flocks; and now, England exports common Australian wool to Germany; importing only the finest Saxony qualities. At the same time, the increasing meat consumption created by steamboats and by railroads makes a succession of joints pay better than clipping, every year, two or three pounds of poor wool. Hence arises a demand for English Dishleys, Cotswolds, and South-downs, Scotch black-faces, and Cheviots, to make two-year old, instead of five-year old mutton, of the foreign scraggy breeds. Thus it is that emperors, kings, princes, and princesses give large prices to our breeders; but like the lord who bought Punch and Judy without securing the services of the showman, unless they secure a good deal more than rams and ewes,

they will be sadly disappointed. They must have, besides, tenants with enterprise and capital; and they must establish easy intercourse between the country and the city, to imitate Britain, north and south.

Passing the pigs without comment, we are brought to the implements, which covered acres of the Champs Elysées—four or five times as much space, in fact, as they covered at Chelmsford; but the Chelmsford exhibition was a vast bazaar, or fair for business; and there the prizes were scarcely a consideration. At the Champs Elysées, half the things shown were toys, tricks, or weak expedients to make wood and sheet-iron do the work of iron bars and solid bolts. In the olden time of Ireland it was not uncommon to meet a pony driven to Cork with a firkin of butter on one side, balanced by a big stone on the other. That is the foreign system of encouraging agriculture: every improver is obliged to carry one or more big stones, in the shape of duties, regulations and monopolies.

Chelmsford was the nineteenth meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society; and there was certainly not more than one new agricultural implement. During the whole nineteen years it is doubtful if more than nine useful new inventions in agricultural implements have been produced. But, during that period, the improvement in all agricultural implements has been enormous—in many instances equal to new inventions.

These improvements have invariably turned on the substitution of iron for wood. They have been introduced step by step with the extension of iron railroads, which have given new markets to Devonshire, Wales, Scotland, and all the counties where want of a market made agricultural produce cheap. These iron railroads have carried coal, too, for the blacksmith who mends the iron plough, and for the farmer who sends for and sets a steam-engine agoing. They have made local agricultural shows possible, and have carried John Bull, who never stirred from home before, to London Smithfield Club, or to Lincoln, or Gloucester. They have carried him back a cargo of guano and a threshing-machine, with a bag full of new ideas. The result of nineteen years of railroads, exhibitions, comparisons, competitions, rubbings together of landlord and tenant, and free trade at home and abroad, was seen at Chelmsford; where the yard was full of farmers buying from the same manufacturers who, twenty years ago, were satisfied to produce curious ingenious agricultural toys for rich landlords.

In France, where the industry of the little peasant farmers is above all praise; where landed proprietors, driven from towns by politics, are most anxious to improve; where the government buys the best English animals at fabulous prices, and specimens of all the best implements;—where there is a minister of agriculture with a host of subordinate Barnacles; where there are model farms with fifteen professors, each in the principal departments (not more useless than model establishments in other countries); where government prizes are annually distributed in each department among implement-makers, whose respective merits are a puzzle to an Englishman with a prejudice in favour of simplicity and durability in machinery; it would seem that the prizes are given not for improving but for deteriorating implements, for substituting wood for iron, and obtaining cheapness at the expense of workmanship. The use of iron in agricultural implements can not be considered worth encouraging in France, while the taxes on English iron-made implements amount, from first to last, to about forty per cent.; the nominal duty is twenty; extras making the rest. Count Conrad de Gourcey, in his Voyage Agricole, tells us that the Crosskill's clod-crusher is one of the most valuable implements for French cultivation; being nearly all of iron, it is taxed nearly sixty per cent. But these taxes are on the manufactured article made in England; there is also a handsome tax on bar iron, which effectually prevents the French blacksmith from indulging in any luxury of iron, or in those experiments which have made great manufacturers of small blacksmiths in England. To add to the tax on iron, there is a tax on coal; so that, supposing a French farmer able to start a steam engine, he is punished in a tax every time he lights a fire; and, to keep iron in countenance, there is a tax on wood. A writer in the Révue des Deux Mondes exclaims with pardonable vanity: "The French agricultural steam engines are as good as the English, only the English makers sell a hundred where the French sell one." The truth is, that whether in doors, windows, or steam engines, the French fail to make a good fit, so of course the French engines do not last long; but, the writer forgets that large sales make good workmanship in mechanical work. The state-logic on this subject is curiously bad:—The French farmer is not so rich as the English farmer, therefore he is kept poor by being taxed. He cannot afford a plough team, therefore he must pay twice as much as an Englishman for a steel digging fork. At Chelmsford there was a great sale for a broad-cast artificial manure distributor, invented by a Norfolk farmer. How could French farmers venture on such purchases? Guano, nitrate of soda, and other valuable manures are foreign productions, and subject by French law to a duty of twenty francs a ton, if they arrive, (as they almost always do), in a foreign ship.

In a word, the French farmer cannot move to mend his ways without a tax, and has not even the privilege of grumbling in print or by petition. But, that is not all. Suppose his ox or cow fit for the butcher, the veterinary

regulations complied with, and the journey to Paris made without any accident to the driver's passport,—at the gates of the city he has to pay an octroi of about seventeen shillings a-head for every beast; or he may sell outside, as he generally does, say at Poissy. But there he has only one customer,—the incorporation of butchers; he must take their price (and they settle that among themselves); or he must go back again. The animal, having been duly taxed and registered, is knocked on the head with a hammer many pounds too light for humanity, but regulated by ordonnance; and then the meat, duly divided, is categoried, priced by another municipal authority, and sold to the excellent cooks and bad judges of meat in Paris.

The agriculture of France, as a matter of fact as well as of example, affects the stomachs of all Europe. There has been too much sounding of trumpets about prizes and exhibitions; as if such paraphernalia were more than the flowers of a feast—as if the rewards of any prince or potentate, professor or prefect, could create prosperity. Isolated, inspected, regulated, taxed, trammeled, octroied, France is annually getting nearer chronic dearth. One fact will prove the truth of this warning: a third of France lies, every year, fallow—that is, barren—for want of the system which, in England, by artificial manures, sheep, and root crops, is doing away with the fallow-system entirely. Thousands of acres of good moorland in France remain unreclaimed, because landlords and tenants, alike heavily taxed, cannot wait three years for profits.

France can never be safe while her rural population lives, in a hot-bed system of agriculture, from hand to mouth. For progressive agriculture we must turn to the English-speaking races, where the land—in spite of the trammels of lawyers, of which we trust one day to get rid—is exploited, to borrow a French word, by the joint capital of landlord and tenant (who are continually stirring up one another to improvement), and by the demand created by railroad communication with cities unwalled, unpassported, and unoctroied.

DOWN AT RED GRANGE.

Yes, sir, I am a mute. My name is Songster, Isaac Songster, at your service. Just ask about me at Bangalore's—they know me; or try Pawler's, or Diggins and Company—see what they will say of me! I have walked for Diggins and Company this twenty years back; behind king, lords, and commons—yes, sir, and behind the Great Duke, too, when he went up to Saint Paul's. Bless you! they all come to us one day.

Well yes, sir! we do meet some queer things in our line. You should hear the watchers, of a long night, sitting round the fire—some of their yarns would astonish you. They've astonished me sometimes, and I've seen a bit of life. You see, sir, the way of it is this. When we come into a house we find the family, as I may say, all of a heap with grieving and sorrowing, so they take no heed of us, and we come and go when we like, and no questions asked; that's the way, sir, we get to many a secret; why look at that business of Mrs. Craven's, down at Red Grange—which I saw myself with my own eyes—why, that was as queer a bit of history as you'd ask to see in print.

Thank you, sir, I shouldn't mind—it is a thirsty day, and it's dry work talking. You'd like to hear about Mrs. Craven? Very well, sir,—it's not a long story either. Here's to you, sir!

Let me see. I should say it was about fifteen year ago—though a year one way or the other isn't much matter. I was with Pawler then—I did not go to Diggins and Company till the year after—and I recollect, one evening about November, a message came down to the yard that Songster was wanted in the office. I went up at once, and found everything in a stir, for a great order had come in—a heavy case at an old hall far off in the country—a family vault business as we would say.

"You will get all your staff together," Pawler said, "and have everything decent and comfortable; I have liberal instructions, so we must do it handsomely, Songster—handsomely, mind you."

We had hard work all that day, cutting up the linen and getting things ready; we were to start that night, and we found the time short enough. About six o'clock that evening, when everything was packed, and Pawler was giving me his last instructions (he was coming down himself later), a young man came running into the office—a fine handsome young man, but with a face as white as one of our linen scarfs. He was very wild and staggering, so that, at first, I thought he was disordered with drink; but I soon saw from the black band on his hat that he must be a relation, a mourner, or a chief-mourner most likely.

"Am I in time?" says the young man, running up to Pawler.

Pawler started up.

"Good gracious, Mr. Craven, is that you? I thought you were in France."

"Am I in time?" says the young man, very fiercely. "Answer me!"

"Plenty," says Pawler, "they don't go this hour. Sit down, sir, for God's sake!"

"Thank heaven!" says Mr. Craven; "I have come night and day for this. Listen to me, Pawler. I can depend on you."

"I hope so, sir," says Pawler; "I have done business with your father and your grandfather before him, and they were always satisfied with me."

"I know that," says he; "but what I want done is this. I can't go down to the Grange

till to-morrow night. I must stay here. I daren't go · but I lay it on you in the most solemn manner to see that the funeral does not go forward till I come."

"Certainly not, sir," says Pawler; "it would be most improper—out of all rule."

"Ah! but you don't know; promise me whatever they—anyone—may say, my poor father shall not go to his grave without my seeing him. But what good is my telling you this? They will have their own way. I can't be there!"

"Sir," says Pawler, "I hope I know my duty; I have your authority, and no man shall get the better of me in this. Make your mind easy, sir."

The young man did not say any more, but covered up his face with his hands, and shortly after went away in great trouble. We started not long after, by the night train—a good many of us, too. I took all my staff with me, as Pawler said, besides some extra hands, for it was to be done handsomely, and no expense spared. We had a pleasant little party going down, for, look you, sir, a professional can't keep on a sad face every day of his life—it's enough to look downcast on his duty, or when he's Walking—that's what I think. Well, we got to Red Grange early next morning—one of your ancient, open-house, have-what-you-like sort of place. Why, sir, when I saw the straggling buildings and the gables, and the roomy porch, and the long avenue with its three rows of lime-trees, Why, I could figure for myself, as plain as if I was looking at them, the big family vault, and the family ancestors in marble, at the church hard by, and the tenants riding up on their stout cobs. These things may be known with half an eye as one may say. We got in as quietly as we could into the house—of course keeping out of the way of company—for you know, sir, families have, some of 'em, a dislike to meeting us on the stairs. There's no accounting for these things, sir. As soon as was decent, I sent up a message asking to see whoever was head of the establishment, as is only usual. I sent the staff into the kitchen, and went myself to the butler's room to learn the geographies of the place. I could have made a picture of him, too, as I went along the gallery. A most respectable man this will be, I said to myself—with a short throat and a husky voice, with some of the old port in his cheeks, and more in the pantry cupboard. I know them well, they are all off the same joint. Well, he was, as I knew he would be, a most respectable man, and showed me how things lay in very few minutes. There was upstairs only Mrs. Craven, second wife of Welbore Craven, Esquire, deceased, and Major Craven, his brother, who managed everything now.

"The major was here very often," says the butler, fetching down the port (I knew he would); "very often—oftener when poor Mr. Welbore Craven was up in London. He was very friendly, the major," said the butler, looking hard at me."

"Ah!" I said, looking at him; "I see. Here during the illness, I'll swear!"

"That he was—the poor man died blessing him!"

"She's young and handsome, I'll warrant?" said I, I never saw her, sir; but I knew she was young and handsome; I did, indeed, sir!

"You may say that," says the butler; "but there's the bell for you."

So I went up at once to the drawing-room. The major was there, sitting at the table—a tall dark man, with a moustache, and a little stoop in the chest—a very gentlemanly-looking man he was, sir, and his voice was as soft as a woman's. The room was rather gloomy, as the lower shutters were closed; and, as well as I could make out, he seemed to be writing at the table. He said:

"You are the person sent down by Mr. Pawler?"

"Yes, sir," said I, "at your service."

"I have sent for you to beg that everything may be in readiness for having the funeral to-morrow. This is Mrs. Craven's wish, for whom I am acting."

"Impossible, sir," I said; "it can't be."

"Did you quite understand me?" he said, very politely.

"I did, sir," I said; "my hearing is as good as most people's. But what I say is this, and no disrespect to you, that the interment of the late Welbore Craven, Esquire, cannot take place to-morrow. You see my chief won't be down, and half the things are to come as yet."

This wasn't quite the truth, for we might have done it at an hour's notice; but I had my orders.

"If that be so," says the major, biting his nails hard, "there's no help for it—a day sooner or later can't make much difference. But what shall I say to her?" (This was to himself.) "Look you, sir, it must be done to-morrow morning. Mrs. Craven wishes it so, and she's mistress here."

"It's no use, sir," I said, "I can't do impossibilities."

"Go down-stairs," he said, stamping his foot.

"I'm sure, sir, Mr. Pawler when he comes will—"

"I think I asked you to go down-stairs?" he said in his polite way, which someway took me very much aback.

Well, sir, I left him there, and we shortly after went up-stairs to put things in order there. There was a sort of a large ante-room outside, where the late Welbore Craven Esquire was lying,—all over black oak, and as dark a room as ever I sat in. It was all full of queer cupboards, and crannies, and pigeon-holes, stuck up and down and everywhere. I never saw such a built thing—never. I settled myself there at once, and sent the others down

to the kitchen to cheer their spirits. When I had drawn a chair to the fire, and stirred up the coals with my foot, I can assure you I felt very comfortable. I felt more comfortable when there were some "things" brought in and set on the table. I sat that way for some hours, until it got quite dark outside—it might be then about six o'clock. I was thinking over what kind of a man the late Welbore Craven, Esquire, was, when the door was opened, and the Major came in with a haughty-looking lady on his arm, all in black.

"I have been consulting with Mrs. Craven," he said, "about this matter, and we are both agreed that the funeral must go on to-morrow."

"Sir," I answered, "I can say no more than what I have said already. I showed you to-day that it was utterly impossible."

"Mr. Songster," said the lady, with a soft, gentle voice—how she picked up my name, I can't say—"Mr. Songster, since you see we are so much interested in this matter, I am sure you will make every exertion for us. Do try, and we shall be so grateful to you."

"What can I do?" I said, at my wits' end from their persecution; "I am not hindering the business; but, as I told the Major, there is nothing ready."

"Never mind that, Mr. Songster," says she; "you will contrive some plan. Do please, and we shall never forget it to you."

I saw she was trying to come round me—pale lady with soft voice—so I said bluffly:

"It's no use talking: you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear: it never was, and it never will be done; take my advice, and wait, and do it decently, and don't shame the family before the neighbours."

I heard the Major whispering to her that there was sense in what I said, and that they had better wait; but, she turned round on him with such a wicked look—ah! The late Welbore Craven Esquire must have had a weary life of it with her!

"Will you let yourself be put off with this fellow's poor excuses? What is he at? Make him speak. I won't be trifled with! I tell you," she said, turning on me, her eyes like burning coals, "I tell you it shall go on to-morrow. I say it!"

I am used to be spoken civilly to, and the word fellow stuck in my throat, so I stood up to her at once:

"Madam, so long as I do my duty by my principal, I shall take no heed of bad words from any lady breathing. He has his instructions from another, as I have mine from him; that other being young Mr. Craven, who has every right to speak here, and to direct here."

I had kept this shot for the last, in case I should be driven to the wall. It told well. You never saw people so shut up in your life.

"He is in France," said the Major.

"No, sir, he is not. I saw him last night myself.

He was trying to keep up Mrs. Craven, who was quite scared and wandering.

"Let us go, let us go," she said. "I knew it would be this way. I knew it would. It is at hand—just at hand—I knew it."

The Major looked quite mystified: indeed, all along I saw he could not make out what she would be at. However, they went out without saying a word more; and I was very glad to be left in peace.

Well, sir, after that I went about a little—looking at everything, just to stretch my limbs—always, however, having an eye to the late Welbore Craven, Esquire, pursuant to orders. I thought it best to look to this myself—especially when I saw they were so determined—and I did not know what might come next: so, about eight o'clock, I made all snug for the night; pulling in a big chair before the fire, and snugging myself down comfortably.

I remember sitting that way some two hours or so, and I amused myself making out the life of the late Welbore Craven, Esquire, in the coals. I found his face there,—a quiet, gentle face, no doubt—with a high forehead and a mild eye. Bless you, I knew how that face looked at proud Mrs. Welbore, as well as if I had lived an age in the house. I'll swear he was proud of her, and loved her maybe to the day of his death. It's a queer thing, that making out faces in the fire!

I found myself thirsty by this time, and began to think very hard how I should get at some drink, if it was only plain water. My friend the butler was asleep in bed, and had most likely put his port to bed too. I had no chance in that quarter; and, was giving myself up for the night to the torments of a dry throat, when I suddenly thought of the traps and pigeon-holes round the room. I was soon on a chair, rummaging right and left; and I think you never came across such queer little places in your life. Such little hall-doors, and doors inside them again, and drawers and catches, you never saw. Such a sight of bottles, too, inside; but none of the sort I wanted. There were plenty of long-necked Frenchmen—champagne and the like—all empty though. There were bottles of olive-oil and fish-sauce, and medicine; but if I was in the Sandy Desert, I could not bring myself to moisten my clay with olive-oil or fish-sauce. So I rummaged on, just for the curiosity of the thing.

I was dragging a long time at what looked like a press-door, more out of obstinacy than anything else, when the bottom came out in my hand, and, strange enough, a little pigeon-hole opened a mile away over my head—just near the ceiling. Here was a start! I set chairs upon each other, and climbed up. I found no end of little drawers all round—in rows, just like a medicine-chest. In some there were locks of hair tied with gold thread, and letters done up with blue ribbons—love-scribbles, you may be sure; but in the last one of all, just at the bottom,

I came upon a pretty-sized flat bottle, with a long glass stopper.

When you are alone that way, with nothing to do, you get a great wish to know the ins and outs of everything. I brought down the flat bottle to the light, and found it was all over gilding, and very handsomely cut,—meant, I suppose, for those perfumed waters ladies like. I've a fancy myself for these scented things; so I got the stopper out, and began smelling it. But of all the queer scents in this world, you never met one like that. I declare it turned me sick all of a moment. Well, sir, I sat down again before the fire, and began to speculate, as my way is, upon the perfume-bottle just, as I said, for something to do. It's not cordial, nor strong waters, suppose it be physic? There can be no harm in trying, I thought, and laid just one drop on my tongue. It didn't taste bad at first, only sourish; but, after a minute or so, it gave me a sort of a shooting feel in the back of the neck, and down along the back-bone, just like the stinging of nettles. It went away in a few minutes; but, while it lasted, it was the strangest feeling I ever felt! "You're not wholesome," I said, as I laid down the gilt bottle, "not wholesome at all." It was an odd thing, you'll admit. And why was it hid away among the love-letters?

Just then, I thought of the pigeon-hole; which it wouldn't do to leave open. It would look as if I had been spying about. So I got upon the chairs again, to shut it. But it wouldn't shut, sir, not a bit of it. The fact was, the little door had gone clean back into the wall, out of hand altogether; and if I had tried for a month I couldn't have got at it. When I saw that, I came down again, and went over to my chair. I knew, in the confusion it would never be noticed—at least not until I was out of the house. So I turned round to the fire, and felt very much inclined for a doze; for, you see, we had come all the night before without sleeping, and I was very tired. I was going off lightly, when I heard the door open behind me, and I saw Mrs. Craven coming in with a lamp in her hand. I never got such a start. She looked so like a ghost, with her long white arms, and her pale face, and her fine hair all down on her back. She reminded me of one of those stage women that come on in the play, stepping on their toes, and going to murder their own fathers or husbands.

"I want to speak to you," says she in a husky kind of voice. "You said to-day you saw Mr. Craven. Tell me about that. What did he say? Is he coming here? Speak—be quick."

"Yes, madam," I said, "I saw Mr. Craven in town, and he said that he would be here to-morrow night."

She twisted up her white fingers together at this. I heard her speaking to herself: "I knew it. I knew it. They would destroy me if they could! Look here," she said, still clutching her long delicate fingers, "It must be done before he comes. Do aid me in this; you only can save me."

"Save you!" I said. What did she mean? I don't know what it was, but I declare to you, sir, it all flashed upon me at once. I saw the whole thing in a minute, and all her odd ways since I entered the house came to look quite natural, quite natural. I felt a kind of rage against her rising in me; and, by way of defying her, I just turned round and looked up at the open pigeon-hole.

Her black eyes followed mine like a flash of lightning.

"Ah!" she cried with a dreadful scream, "You have been spying on me! You shall suffer for it. But you are all in a league to destroy me. Give me that back, I say! Give it up, give it up!"

"Give up what?" I said.

"The bottle you have stolen! Give it me quick! A vile plot to crush a poor woman. Give it up, or I will kill you!"

She made a rush at me, but I stepped quickly round behind the table.

"Ha, ha," said I, "that won't do; it's all safe here,"—touching my coat-pocket.

"Give it me, give it me!" she kept shrieking over and over again; and then she tore her hair, and beat on the table with her unfortunate fingers, as if she would break it through. I suppose she stayed there near an hour, raging round the room, and going over the same thing, "Give it me!" At last she went away.

I never passed such a time as that, before or since. I never shall forget what I went through with that terrible woman. All that night she was coming in and out, begging and imploring of me to save her. She came back,—well I suppose twenty times. Once she went down on her knees to me, and I was very near giving way to her, for she was a fine creature, and it went against me to see her on the ground there breaking her heart. Another time she brought in a box of her diamonds, and wanted to force them into my hands; but I always thought of the late Welbore Craven, Esquire, lying in the next room, and that helped me to withstand all her tears and her diamonds and her gold,—for she brought that out, too, in plenty. Besides, I had a sort of pride in not letting myself be got over by that wicked woman.

Well, sir, the daylight began to break at last, and then she went away for good, raging and cursing as it seemed to me. I knew she would not come back again because of the light, and the servants beginning to be about. So I gathered myself up in the chair—being pierced through with the cold—and stayed that way till morning.

When it was broad day, I found myself with the cold ashes before me, and felt very wretched and uncomfortable; for you see, this was the second night I had gone without any sleep. Just as I was thinking of going down to get something to warm me up,

the Major come in, as white as a sheet, with two red spots under his eyes, and stooping more than ever. I knew what he came for; but I was not going to be got over by him. He tried to reason with me as he called it; his white gentlemanlike hands shaking and trembling all the time. He said it was a dreadful thing to bring shame into an ancient family like this. It had given him a great shock, he said, and had come upon him like a thunderbolt; and I must say, sir, I have always thought the poor gentleman had nothing to do with the business. I really pitied him having to do with that woman. But I told him plainly that when young Mr. Craven arrived he should hear everything; but, until he came, I could and should do nothing. So he went away as he came.

Ten minutes after I heard a sound of wheels on the gravel; and, running over to the window, saw a chaise all covered with dust coming hard up the avenue. I suspected who was inside, and ran down to the door to meet them. Young Mr. Craven jumped out first, then came Pawler, and after him a quiet looking gentleman in black.

"Mrs. Craven here?" says the young man going past me.

"We're here sooner than you thought, Songster," says Pawler, nodding to me.

We all went up-stairs together, and the gentleman in black (who was a London doctor), went with Mr. Craven straight to the room of the late Welbore Craven, Esquire. They said he was a great professor from the hospitals, and could find out how people came by their deaths. So I knew well what they were about in that room. I staid outside, having no fancy for such things, and looked out of the window at the fine park and the great limes. Bless me, sir, if I didn't see a figure in black stealing along behind the trees! I knew her at the first look, and I turned round to call out for some one; but I thought the poor wretch would have troubles enough of her own without my bringing more on her. So I looked out of the window again, to see what she would do next. When she got to the top of the hill, beyond the limes, I saw her stop and wait a little; presently a man came out cautiously and joined her; then they both disappeared behind the trees.

About an hour after, they came out of the room. Mr. Craven very wild and excited, and the others talking with him and trying to keep him quiet. Where was she? Where was she? he said. Let him have but vengeance, that was all he wanted. But, the quiet gentleman from London took him aside into a corner, and spoke to him a long time very coolly and soberly, and gradually Mr. Craven became steadier and listened to him; and, as I made it out, they agreed that as she was gone, it was best to let her go her own way, and have done with her.

It was all carefully hushed up, and though there was some talk among the neighbours, no one, I believe, ever got to hear how it really happened. I heard a long time after that, as she died somewhere in France.

Well, sir, it was a queer thing to happen to a man, wasn't it?

CHIP.

SODEN.

THERE is still time for a trip to Germany. The bright September sun often shines all day long, here where I write, over a glorious country. Here while I write, I see it rising, and it tints with rosy hue one of the fairest landscapes in the world. Far to the south the horizon is marked by the beautiful lines of the mountains of the Odenwald, with its woody Melibocus, having its base veiled by a light cloud that covers Darmstadt. Here and there one catches the gleam of a ray of light upon the river Main. Straight before me is the little town of Höchst; and all over the plain, glowing in mellow tints, are innumerable fruit-trees, from among which peep the spires and houses of many villages, among them, those of the little town of Soden, over which a thin, blue mist of smoke is gathering. The foreground of the picture, from the window of my lodging, is made by the hills at the base of the Taunus, covered with walnut and chesnut-trees, famous all over Germany for their abundant produce. Even of the orchard fruit a great part, packed in blotting-paper, will in due time find its way to chilly England.

I say nothing against Baden-Baden, Wiesbaden, Hombourg, or Kissingen. Their springs are good, and they who visit them may spend money and see much of a certain kind of life. But they who seek health only, who would see nature, drink the medicinal waters, and inhale fresh air, should bear Soden in mind. Perhaps there is no other spot in Europe where so many and various medicinal wells are to be found upon so small a territory. Within the space of a square English mile, there are more than fifty; many of them similar, of course, but among the twenty that have been examined chemically some great differences have been found. Everywhere in the meadows and gardens one sees wells, sometimes covered with a stone, sometimes neglected and used only by the country people, who fill pitchers out of them at springs which yield draughts more refreshing and agreeable than Seltzer water. Most of the wells are cold, but some are warm, and there is a search now being made for hot wells, which, no doubt, are to be discovered.

The merits of Soden as a spa are well known to the Frankfort people, who send hither every year their wives and children. The Frankfort capitalists alone are to be thanked for the existence of a railway between Soden and Höchst. The place—now, by the railway, half an hour's journey from Frankfort—has not yet been discovered and

invaded by the English; it is but very recently that its own neighbours have so far advanced its dignity as to provide it with a pump-room and gardens, at the same time enclosing and adorning its chief wells. The little spa, protected from the north winds by the last hills of the Taunus, and favoured with a climate frequently compared to that of Nice, has been visited this season by about three thousand persons, among whom it is considered by the neighbours fortunate that there were few English. It is not because I am ungrateful to the place, that I have troubled myself to commend it to my countrymen. I know well that it will not interest the loungers whom the Germans do not love. It is a quiet haunt for quiet people innocent of dissipation. It is unprovided with a gaming table, and must needs be visited by those who seek only for wholesome recreation, and who can feel themselves to be in good society among the works of God. Great people who come hither arrive without their state. The Duchess of Orleans has spent here many months, and means to come again.

Ignorant of medicine, I can record only the popular impression of the most important uses of the Soden climate and its waters. All agree that Soden is an admirable spa for anyone who suffers from diseases of the chest. Persons even in the last stage of consumption have here, it is said, found relief; and the wells (which are not named but numbered) differing in strength, those having the first numbers will not disagree with the unpractised stomach. Many disordered stomachs are invigorated here, and many a weak frame has acquired strength. Women and children are much benefited by the waters, and by the fresh mountain air. The number of the springs, as I have said, leads to the neglect of many that are very valuable. Thus there is, near the village of Neuenhain, situated on a hill that looks down upon Soden, a chalybeate spring (Stahl brunnen) used almost solely by the peasants, who well understand its tonic power. I should say that Soden was the very place for persons convalescent after serious disease.

The neighbourhood of Soden abounds in spots long famous for their beauty,—Konigstein, Falkenstein, Eppstein, the Lorsbach valley, Kronenthal, and Kronenberg, &c. Excursions of another character are to be made easily to Frankfort, Mayence, and Wiesbaden, places very quickly reached by rail. Promenades, one might say, are before every door, and almost every house is surrounded by its shady garden and its orchard.

The accommodations of the place are of a kind to content reasonable people. Every needful comfort is provided in the Kurhaus, and in several good hotels, as well as in private houses. Ordinaries are open to the visitors at charges varying from eight pence to two shillings, and at breakfast, though the bread is not agreeable, the cream is of a quality almost unknown in British towns. In many houses baths are to be had, for which the usual charge is a shilling.

A lady is in the place who has lived in England, speaks both French and English, understands English wants, and who can let lodgings to the English visitor. As she is alone in this respect, I do no person injustice, and may save trouble to some reader if I sin so far against etiquette as to make public her name—Miss Winckler. There are five or six private medicinal springs in her garden, and a bath is established in her house, which is also in immediate proximity to the chief spring. Her prices, which depend upon the time of year, are fixed for every month in the season, and the utmost ever demanded by her for a single room is sixteen shillings or seventeen shillings a week.

This season it has happened that no bed was to be had in Soden, and many visitors have lodged at Höchst or Frankfort, waiting till apartments were vacated. Others, whom I think wise, take up their abodes at Neuenhain, and in some other parts of the surrounding district. By so doing, they may perhaps get fresher air and finer views, while they are living at small cost among the kindliest of people. One thing I may as well add, that they do not live among a servile race. The German peasant has a truer sense of his own place in creation than the British cottager; and this is more especially the case when he abides near the mountains. You may lodge wherever they will have you in the country about Soden and receive careful attendance, be provided with clean rooms and all things that the resources of the landlord or landlady, helped by your money, are able to supply. However it may be years hence, now it may be safely said, that you will nowhere find yourself the victim of extortion; but at the same time I must add, that you will find nowhere anyone disposed to be a victim to that sort of moral extortion in which English lodgers are not quite unpractised.

LOVE OF BEAUTY.

If one leaf fall from the o'erhanging tree,
Whose complete form is echoed in the lake,
Unto its kindred image it will flee,
Among the myriad making no mistake,
And by such instinct, which cannot be wrong,
Do we find souls that will reflect our own,
As once I found one face, amid a throng,
Which still my memory bears, as it were carved on stone.

Like the combinèd light of many stars,
In her were many beauties blent in one,
And her soul, as a captive through his bars,
Looked through her face, like a beclouded sun,
Yet beamed with love all kindred hearts to win,
And, in her movements, graces never taught,
Revealed the beauty of that soul within,
And flowed like poet's words, expressing beauty's thought.

She threw me but one careless sunny glance,
Like summer lightning from the brow of Night
Flashing upon the watcher's countenance;
Only a stranger's glance, but full of light;
She flung it freely, as the laughing brook
Flings its spray on the grateful flowers that twine
Their arms round its green banks, and, in that look,
Some precious sunlight flashed from her soul into mine.

I thought that, of the gallants standing by,
Who ministered to her most faint desire,
There was not one who loved her more than I,
Or in whose breast her glance would kindle fire
More glowing than in mine: yet they could stand
Around her form, and laugh with merry glee;
Whilst I might never touch that snowy hand,
Nor hear that gentle voice but once addressed to me.

Of me the world may say, "His mind is weak;
He wastes his love on one he will not know,
And stands apart, and never dares to speak,
And then in verses vents his idle woe."
I tell you that to hope to write a line
Which might exalt to love one breast beside,
Or gain one thought from nobler heart than mine,
Were more than if I wooed, and won her for a bride.

And not for her alone am I content
With earnest zeal to set myself apart,
For love's requital, ere my youth be spent,
Subduing all the longings of my heart;
But for all beauty which has won my love,
For some who only think of me with scorn,
And some who now are angel-forms above,
I choose this lonely path the world may deem forlorn.

Content unknown to love a noble band
Of radiant forms, scattered I know not where,
Who still, by night, illume sleep's shadowy land
With glances full of light through golden hair;
And, like the spider, who demands no leave
In palace chambers its fine net to frame,
The web of my affections thus to weave
About some gentle hearts who never knew my name.

ROYAL TREASURES.

The word Treasury had, during the Middle Ages, a very different significance from that which it conveys at present. The place was not then, as now, a mere office for the transaction of business, but one of actual deposit for the most precious objects belonging to royalty. Whatever coined money the monarch possessed was, of course, bestowed in safety there; but it also contained his regal ornaments, his wardrobe, the jewels with which he decked his person, the rich tapestry that adorned his palaces, the vessels of gold and silver that glittered at his banquets,—everything, in short, that had a real, tangible value. Being without public securities, wherein to invest the wealth of the State (or, we had better say, his own), the Sovereign laid out all the money not wanted for war or pleasure, in the costliest things that could be found, as much because such purchases were his best mode of investment, as because he liked to have the things themselves. Nothing came amiss in these royal collections, there being scarcely an article in them that, apart from the fashion in which it was designed, or the uses to which it was destined, was not of some intrinsic value,—a value upon which, in case of necessity, money might be immediately raised.

Although deficient, for its extent, in one important feature, and not comparable for the magnificence of its jewels and plate to the treasures contained in the Green Vault of the royal palace at Dresden, or in the imperial jewel-office (Schatz-kammer) at Vienna, few public collections give so complete an idea of what constituted the wealth of a royal treasury as the cabinets in the galleries of the Louvre at Paris; those cabinets which are, for the most part, passed over with little more than the cursory glance that people in general bestow upon a shop full of bric-à-brac; yet there is a great deal at once curious and interesting to be learnt from them, and by the aid of a very useful work published in Paris about three years since, by M. de Laborde, the Keeper of the Middle Age collections in the great French museum (Notice des Emaux, Bijoux, et Objets divers, exposés dans les galeries du Musée du Louvre), we may acquire, even without a visit, a very good notion of their contents.

The deficiency to which I have alluded, consists in the absence of any large quantity of the enamelled work and jewellery for which the Paris goldsmiths of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were celebrated. The greater part of their elaborate handiwork has disappeared in the crucible, and, with the exception of a small number of rare objects, the Louvre collection may be said to consist only—but then in a most beautiful and complete manner—of ornaments not anterior to the sixteenth century. Wanting the identical objects which gave so much character to the luxury of the most artistical period of the Middle Ages, M. de Laborde consoles himself by reproducing the Inventory of the jewels of Louis of France, Duke of Anjou, which was drawn up by the hand of that prince about the year thirteen hundred and sixty-six, and enumerates nearly a thousand different articles, in gold, silver, and enamel,—diamonds, emeralds, sapphires, rubies, crystals, fashioned and set in every variety of form, and of almost inappreciable value. A great deal of plunder must have fallen in the way of Louis of Anjou, besides the goods and chattels which he legitimately acquired, during a career which did not extend beyond five and forty years; but, with opportunity a prince "that way inclined" could do much, and there are some points about his character which lead one to believe that he was not an over scrupulous person.

The Duke of Anjou was the second son of John the Good, King of France, by Bonne of Luxembourg, the daughter of that brave, blind

King of Bohemia who was killed at the battle of Crecy: his horse, for sure guidance into the thickest of the fray, being attached to the saddles of four attendant knights, all of whom were also slain. At seventeen years of age, Louis drew his sword by his father's side on the fatal field of Poitiers, but he was neither wounded nor taken prisoner; and, before he was twenty, he exercised the functions of lieutenant of the king in the provinces of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine, at which time it is probable he first began the lucrative occupation of a collector. But, he was disturbed in that pleasant pursuit; peace being concluded between England and France in the year thirteen hundred and sixty, one of the conditions of the treaty by virtue of which King John was released from his captivity in the Savoy Palace in the Strand, was the substitution, for his own person, of a hostage in that of his second son. The title of Duke of Anjou, which was conferred upon Louis to reconcile him to this enforced surrender, did not make amends for the bitterness of exile; for, after enduring his captivity about eighteen months, to the shame and grief of his honourable father he broke his parole and fled from London, avoiding the presence of the king, and taking refuge in the castle of Guise, which belonged to him in right of his wife. We all know how nobly King John returned to the prison, where, two years afterwards, he died. When that event took place, the Dauphin, Anjou's elder brother, succeeded to the throne of France by the title of Charles the Fifth; and, though he might little esteem the probity of Louis, he appreciated in his character those qualities of resolution and capacity for command which were more serviceable than honesty in the then disturbed state of the kingdom. In consequence of the trust which Charles reposed in him, the Duke of Anjou successively governed in Brittany, Languedoc, Guienne, and Dauphiny, from thirteen hundred and sixty-four to thirteen hundred and eighty; and those sixteen years were, without question, turned to good account. He added vastly to his spoils on the death of Charles the Fifth, when he became Regent of France; but another ambition, that of attempting the conquest of Naples, of which he died king, caused the dispersion of a great part of his treasures. Had not Louis of Anjou paid the debt to time and mortal custom before the usually allotted period, he might have lived to enlarge, as king, the enormous accumulations of the Prince of France; but, a fever cut him short in the castle of Bisceglia, near Bari, in Apulia, and all of his wealth that remains is the description of it.

It is not my intention to offer a resumé of this remarkable inventory, for that alone would more than fill a number of Household Words; but what I propose is, to dip into it at random, extracting here and there the account of some jewel of price, and then giving an explanation of its most remarkable attributes.

I will begin with an image of Saint Michael, of silver gilt. "He is armed beneath his mantle, and stands with both feet upon a serpent" (the Wicked One), "which serpent has its two wings enamelled azure within and without, and these wings are between the feet and legs of the aforesaid Saint Michael, who carries in his right hand a long cross of white silver, which he thrusts down the throat of the aforesaid serpent; and on the top of the cross is a small peacock, surmounted by a cross of red enamel; in his left hand the aforesaid Saint Michael holds a small apple of silver gilt, on which is also a little cross; and he stands upon a large pedestal with six corners. And on the flat beside the said corners are enamels whereon men are represented riding on beasts, and the front of the pedestal is enamelled with lozenges, some of azure, others of green, having red borders; and the said pedestal rests on six small lions recumbent; and it weighs in all, including the wings, which are large, gilt, and chased, seventy-three marks, Troyes weight." This ornament belonged to the prince's private chapel, which was richly stored with saintly statuettes of gold and silver. Here is a smaller one of "Saint John the Baptist on a base (entablement) enamelled in azure, with angels playing on divers instruments, seated on three young lions. And the said image holds in his left hand a round reliquary of crystal ornamented with a hoop of silver gilt. And with his right hand shows Ecce Agnus Dei (Behold the Lamb of God); and weighs altogether nine marks and one ounce."

These images in precious metal were of three kinds: solid, moving (mouvantes), and those which opened (ouvrantes). The two latter sort deserve special mention. Images endowed with motion were favourite toys—lay as well as clerical—during the Middle Ages. The inventory of the jewels of Anne of Brittany, towards the close of that epoch, contains "a picture of Hercules with movable eyes and eyebrows (les sourcils et yeux branlans);" and amongst the accounts relating to the Church of St. Maclou at Rouen is a sum entered as payment to Nicolas Quesnel, image-maker (ymaginier), for two images of moving angels to place upon the pinnacles of the organs. Opening images abounded also in the cabinets of royalty, and amongst ecclesiastical treasures. A very fine one in ivory, belonging to the collection in the Louvre, represents the Annunciation, where the body of the Virgin opens, and discloses the three personages of the Holy Trinity, with Saint Peter and Saint Paul on either side; this description of jewel was common. Of another kind, in the inventory of the Dukes of Burgundy, is a fleur-de-lis of wood, gilt outside, and opening; within is a

Crucifixion and images of Our Lady and Saint Anne. The inventory of King Charles the Fifth of France mentions a pine-cone which opened in the middle and displayed the mystery of the Visitation of the Three Kings. Among the treasures of Louis of Anjou was a vessel—literally, a small ship (une navette)—for holding incense; on the cover, or deck, of which were two emeralds, trefoil-shaped, and inside the cover were small animals and trees enamelled, and within the vessel a spoon of white silver. These navettes were also used for spices and other condiments. Many of the opening images were remarkable for ingenuity of construction; but the great characteristic of those which were made of the precious metals was their enormous value. Here is the description of a splendid jewel of this kind which was presented by that she-wolf, Isabeau de Bavière, to her poor mad husband, Charles the Sixth of France, as a new-year's gift, in fourteen hundred and four. "An image of Our Lady seated in a garden of trellis-work, holding the infant Jesus. The former figure is of white enamel and the latter of bright red. A clasp on the breast of the Virgin is ornamented with six pearls and a balass ruby, and about her head is a crown with two rubies, a sapphire, and sixteen pearls, the crown being supported by two angels in white enamel. The garden is decorated with five large balass rubies, five sapphires, and thirty-two pearls, and upon a lettern rests a book ornamented with twelve pearls. Three images of gold—to wit, Saint Catherine, Saint John the Baptist, and Saint John the Evangelist, are placed below the Virgin, and beneath these again is a figure of the king himself, kneeling on a cushion enriched with four pearls and emblazoned with the arms of France. In front of the king, on one side, is a small pedestal of gold, on which lies his book of prayers, behind him is a tiger (a type of his queen), and on the other side stands an armed knight in white and blue enamel, bearing the king's golden helmet. In the lowest part of the ornament is an esquire, in enamel, holding by the bridle a white enamelled horse, with saddle and housings of gold, and resting his disengaged hand on a staff." The weight of this jewel was nearly eighteen marks of gold, and the framework in which it was set about thirty marks of silver-gilt.

In the groups, generally speaking, the Agnus Dei was not merely indicated by the attitude of Saint John the Baptist—as in the image mentioned above—but was presented in substance, as an object of which great account was made. It was a circular waxen tablet, impressed with the sign of the Paschal Lamb, and was made, in quantities, at Rome, with the remains of the Paschal taper, which was melted on Holy Saturday, at the same time that the new one was blest by the Pope. These tablets were then distributed throughout Christendom, and, when worn on the person, were supposed to impart marvellous virtues; their efficacy, when placed in churches, extended to those who came and prayed before them. The jewellers, consequently, employed all their skill in fixing them in frames and cases, ornamented with pearls and precious stones. The inventory of Mary Stuart describes an Agnus Dei, set in rich crystal and gold, with a small golden chain; and another, in silver, belonging to Charles the Sixth of France, was richly enamelled with figures and garnished with twenty-nine pearls.

In the inventory of Louis of Anjou are many pictures (tableaux), but these must not be literally accepted as paintings. It rarely happened that even the pictures which we consider such, were without some adventitious ornamentation; but the greater number of what were called pictures consisted entirely of solid materials, into which gold, silver, and precious stones entered very largely. The following may be taken as a specimen: "A picture of silver-gilt, sown inside (semé par dedenz) with large and small emeralds, large and small balass rubies, large and small cameos (camahieux), and of small pearls a great quantity. And in the middle is a very large cameo, in which appear Our Lady placing Our Lord in his cradle, and the angels around; and, beneath, Our Lady bathing her Child; and, behind her, Saint Joseph, seated, and rests the said picture on a border (souage), which is sown with emeralds, rubies of Alexandria (rubis d'Alisandrie), and small pearls. And between the said border and the tabernacle, is a capital of masonry with windows, within which are images carved. And weighs in all fourteen marks six ounces and a half."

Cameos are mentioned as being inserted in this picture; and amongst the ornaments of the middle ages, the cameo, whether sculptured on shell or agate, held a prominent place. Confined to the manufacture of the period, the subjects were really religious, and represented what were intended—Holy Families, Annunciations, Crucifixions, and so forth; but when antiques were enshrined, Jupiter very often did duty for Saint John, and Apollo for Saint Peter. The art which created the cameos was fully appreciated, but, the subject, if susceptible of application, was made to fit the nearest legend of the Church to which it bore resemblance. Thus, in the inventory of the Duke of Normandy is a cameo representing Hercules struggling with a lion,—where the pagan demi-god was identified with Samson; a nymph bathing, passed for Susannah; Mercury with his Petasus was simply described as "The head of a man wearing a chaplet;" the Father of the Gods, with the inscription "Zeus," only appeared to be "A naked man seated on a cloth, holding an eagle, and is written a word before him, and is seated in a rim of gold;" Cupid winged, was called "A

little angel (Angelot) quite naked;" a Bacchante with a thyrsus, "A woman holding a long thing in her hand" (une femme qui tient une longue chose en sa main); and so of a thousand others. But, the cameos executed at the time left no doubt as to the subject represented. In the Testament of Queen Joan (d'Evreux), an opening picture (tableau cloant) is described of silver gilt, in the middle of which is a cameo of the Annunciation of Our Lady, strewn with pearls and precious stones, and priced at thirty francs. The treasury of King Charles the Fifth of France contained numberless cameos, inserted in reliquaries, rings, crucifixes, and other objects. A purse is mentioned that held the cross which the Emperor Constantine always carried about him in battle. It was enclosed in a golden jewel, ornamented with a large cameo, on which was carved in relief (enlevé) the image of Our Lord, eight large balass rubies, and ten large pearls. Belonging to King Charles the Sixth of France was "A small golden picture, longish and hollow-shaped (sur façon de fons de cuve), of the size of the hollow of the hand, or thereabouts; in which is a small image of Our Lady, whose face and hands are of cameo, the body down to the waist of sapphire; she holds her naked child, made of cameo, and the said picture is enriched with three balass rubies, three sapphires, six pearls, and hangs by a hook."

But, besides religious subjects, portraiture and the pursuits of the time were introduced. Thus, in the inventory of the Duke of Berry (in the year fourteen hundred and fifteen), is "A ring of gold, in which is the face of my lord (the Duke) counterfeited on a cameo;" and "A large square cameo, in which is a man sitting under a tree, holding a hawk on his fist, and a dog before him, with a net spread out, the border of which net is enamelled with fleurs-de-lis."

Before I quit the subject of cameos, I may observe that there was a description of painting employed generally in the miniatures of illuminated manuscripts, called painting in cameo (peinture en camahieu), which consisted in the simple contrast of black on a white ground; but the use of the term did not obtain till after the Renaissance.

The treasury of Louis of Anjou was not without reliquaries. These cases for relics were of all sizes from the largest, in the shape of a church (commonly called a chasse), to the medallion which was worn round the neck; sometimes they assumed the form of busts in silver, of detached limbs covered with metal, of candles containing the Holy Innocents, of bones, crystals and pictures, such as have been described; and the contents were always regularly ticketed, I suppose for fear of mistakes. Of religious relics all travellers in Catholic countries have seen enough, but there were others to which more real interest was attached—relics of affection and those that were truly historical. In the inventory of Piers Gaveston, the favourite of our Edward the Second, appears "A cup of gold, enamelled in blue, which Queen Alionore gave to the King that now is, with her blessing" (od sa béniceon). A bequest from Queen Joan of Evreux to Queen Blanche of Navarre—she was called by her countrymen "Beautiful Wisdom" (Belle Sagesse)—consisted of "a small diamond which the King of Navarre, brother of my lady, gave formerly to me, the same which he always wore on his person, because it had belonged to their father, whom God absolve." And in the will of John of Gaunt, the father of Henry of Lancaster, is this entry: "An ancient clasp of gold (fermail d'or del veil manere), written all over with the names of God, which my very honoured lady and mother, the Queen, whom God absolve, gave me, commanding that I should preserve it, with her blessing, and I will that he keeps it with the blessing of God and mine." Somewhat less authentic, perhaps, is a gold ring with a sapphire, of which mention is made in Pier Gaveston's inventory, said to have been forged (forged, indeed!) by the hands of Saint Dunstan. A certain pair of tongs, which the same saint so deftly used, would have made an invaluable relic! In thirteen hundred and fifty-nine, when John of France was prisoner in England, he gave Edward the Third a cup, which had descended to him from Saint Louis, out of which the latter used to drink, and Edward gave his captive, in return, the goblet he habitually drank from. One of the legacies of Queen Joan of Evreux to Philip of Valois was a weapon which had belonged to Louis the Ninth; the pointed knife which hung at his side when he was taken prisoner at Massoys (Mansourah). Relics of Saint Louis, indeed, were held in the highest estimation from his triple claim as warrior, saint, and king; his cups, his daggers, his books of prayer, were preserved, and his garments even to the meanest. The inventory of Charles the Sixth mentions, for instance, "The shirt of Saint Louis, of which one sleeve is wanting, a piece of his cloak, and a roll of parchment, in which, written with his own hand, are the instructions he sent to his daughter." The psalter, also, in which Saint Louis learnt to read, was amongst the relics possessed by the Dukes of Burgundy. These princes had another relic, the genuineness of which may be doubted. "A large wild-boar's tusk, said to be one of Garin's, the wild-boar of Lorraine." This animal cuts a conspicuous figure in the Romance of Gaherin le Lorrain. Something more to the purpose in the Dijon collection was a sword that had belonged to the famous hero Bertrand du Guesclin (une espée de guerre qui fut à Messire Bertrand de Glaiquin). There is an entry made in the inventory of Amboise of the claim of another renowned

knight: "A sword with an iron hilt, fashioned like a key, called the sword of Lancelot du Lac: it is said to have been made by the fairies." Relics of this sort abounded, we have them of all kinds: not the least interesting, perhaps, of the collection at Amboise, was the armour of Joan of Arc (Harnoys de la Pucelle), but whether it be the same that is now shown as hers in the Museum of Artillery, in Paris, I am not able to say.

Somewhat akin to these relics of affection were the garters, rings, and girdles, which bore inscriptions, or were otherwise rendered attractive. The garter, which, from the habit of constant riding and the form of the ladies' dresses, was frequently exposed, was often a highly decorated ornament. Thirty-six sous of Paris were paid, in the year thirteen hundred and eighty-eight, for "four tissues of fine azure silk to make two pairs of garters for the Duchess of Orleans, the same being furnished with buckles of silver-gilt." Another pair for the same noble lady was made of gold enamelled with tears and pansies (esmaillées à larmes et à pensées). The recipient of these rich ornaments was the beautiful Valentine of Milan, who, after the murder of her husband in the Rue Barbet, adopted —with enough of tears and sad thoughts— this melancholy motto: "No more to me is aught; nothing to me is all" (plus ne m'est rien; rien ne m'est plus). The widowed princess also took for her device—such was the custom of the time—the vessel called a "chantepleure:" it was a kind of watering-pot, from whence the water fell drop by drop, like tears. One of these emblems, made very small, in gold, was given by the Duchess to her brother Alof of Cleves, as a socket for the feather of his hat. The finger-rings of the middle ages were as variously ornamented as those which are worn now-a-days, and admitted of all kinds of devices. Even the wedding-ring underwent a metamorphosis. Originally, as Pliny tells us, of iron and perfectly plain, it became at a very early period, amongst Christians, a rich golden ornament. In the inventory of the Duke of Berry, already cited, a ring is described "having a precious stone in it, with which Joseph espoused Our Lady," and as late as the commencement of the seventeenth century, Gabrielle d'Estrées possessed the wedding-ring which her lover, Henry the Fourth of France, put on the finger of his first wife, Marguerite, "in which was a table diamond." The girdles of persons of rank, of both sexes, were generally as rich as they could be made, and shone with jewels and gold. The belt of Charlemagne was a treasury in itself, the Chronicle of St. Denis telling us that it was six spans in length, besides what hung below the buckle. Queen Joan of Bourbon, the wife of Charles the Wise, had a golden girdle, the foundation of which was of black tissue, and the surface was ornamented with a heart set round with pearls, emeralds, and rubies of Alexandria; the two buckles were of blue enamel; and a small gold chain, formed of fleurs-de-lys, hanging from it, was enriched with a fine sapphire. Another of these expensive girdles was studded with eighty-six golden nails arranged so as to form the letters L and J, with a lily between them; and a third is mentioned in the Royal Accounts which served as a hat-band, and was made flexible like a cord, with a running ornament of roses, leaves and flowers, enamelled of the proper colours on a dark ground. The pendant extremity of these belts (called "le mordant"), was often worth almost a king's ransom. To a girdle of Joan of Navarre was attached a mordant in which were five large sapphires, five rubies, four diamonds, and twenty large pearls, and the buckle of the same was encrusted with precious stones. Mottos and war-cries were also figured on the belts of kings and nobles. There is a payment entered in the royal accounts of Charles the Wise, to Hermant Ruissel, a goldsmith, for having made and forged (fait et forgié) nine letters of gold expressing "Espérance;" and such devices were frequent.

It is not to be supposed that the table of a prince like Louis of Anjou, whose taste for ornament was so strongly developed, was set out with less magnificence than his private chapel. The inventory of his household plate might excite the envy of Hunt and Roskell. What would they say to such a flask as this? "A large flask, gilt and enamelled after the following manner: It stands upon a square pedestal supported by four recumbent lions (gisant sur leurs pieds), and above these lions are several raised borders (souages), and at the base are four azure enamels representing wild beasts. The body (or round part) of the flask has on it six enamels, in which men do various things (où il y a hommes qui font plusieurs choses), such as cutting trees and other acts of labour; and in the middle is an azure enamel, where a man on horseback is fighting with a lion, and the said lion stands on his two hind legs, and with his claws seems to tear and wound the horse. The sides of the flask (the flat part) are adorned with two wreaths of chased foliage which runs from the base to the neck, where they are interlaced; their sides are enamelled, and between the enamels is a raised and grained border, on which are seen two flying serpents with blue enamelled wings. And the necks of the said serpents are rings that hold the cords of the flask, which are of silk, strewn along their entire length with green and azure enamels, and gilt ornaments in form of the letter S. And the neck of the said flask terminates in an enameled pipe, from whence falls a small golden chain, the end of which is attached to one of the serpents. And this flask weighs altogether twenty-three marks, six ounces, six deniers." Some pains were

taken to mount the goblet described below. I follow the original as nearly as I can: "A lady, one-half of whose body is that of a woman, and the other half that of a wild beast on two feet, stands on a terrace enamelled azure with small trees, stags, and greyhounds. And from the bosom (giron) of the lady issues the head of an ox, one of whose horns she clasps in her hands; and in the said head is a spout (biberon), and to the ears of the said head, and at the sides of the said lady, beneath her arms, hang small chains with the escocheons of the Archbishop of Rouen and Marigny; and the said lady wears a mantle cut up at the sides, and a high hat on her head, both of which are enamelled; and behind the said lady, on the back of the said beast (her other part), is placed a goblet of crystal mounted on a silver enamelled pedestal with scroll and open work, and round the crystal are four bats, and the lid is bordered with silver, and the knob (fretel) is made of vine-leaves, from whence issues a three-sided bud, enamelled azure and green. And the said lady, the pedestal, the goblet, and the lid, weigh altogether five marks, seven ounces, and twelve deniers."

This must have been an awkward goblet to drink out of, but these extravagant cups are numerous in the inventories of Louis of Anjou. We have a gilt monkey on a green terrace, under an oak, wearing a bishop's mitre, and extending his paws in the manner of a benediction; and he, with all his attendant devices, is only the framework, as it were, of another goblet. We have a cock serving as a vase (aiguière), the body and tail covered with pearls, the neck, wings, and head silver, enamelled yellow, green, and azure, and on his back a fox, which seizes him by the comb. We have a fountain filled with fish on a terrace where grows a lofty tree, in the midst of which is a flying serpent; and a monkey sits beneath, fishing with a line and basket, having just caught a barbel; while dogs and rabbits, children and butterflies, enamel the ground. In short, there was nothing grotesque or incongruous that did not find a place in these singular drinking vessels. But the aiguière, generally speaking, was of very elegant form, and the materials of which it was composed exceedingly costly. Its attendant cup, the hanap, was made of the richest as well as the poorest substances, according to the rank of the owner. King Charles the Wise drank out of a hanap of jasper set with gold and precious stones; the hanap of the artisan outside his palace gate was a wooden cup. One of the many hanaps of Louis of Anjou is thus described: "A hanap with a cover, on a tripod, sown with enamels, in which are trees and rabbits of divers colours; and on the pedestal are three flying serpents, with azure enamelled wings, and by means of their tails they support the hanap. And between their tails are three other smaller flying serpents, also with enamelled wings. And the said hanap and cover is ornamented with a raised foliage, and on the top is a knob—weighing, in all, eight marks, seven ounces." The next is of a more poetical character: "A hanap on three feet, strewed with enamels of birds and raised foliage, and the knob of the cover gilt and adorned with raised leaves. And round the bottom of the hanap, and on the lid, are enamelled the History of Tristan and Yseut; and the hanap is supported by three dogs, and weighs, altogether, ten marks, three ounces." But, the costliest hanap in the Duke of Anjou's collection was one that weighed upwards of thirty-two marks. On this cup, amidst the most splendid jewels, appeared shepherds playing the flute and Saracen horn —shepherdesses spinning while their dogs guard the flocks, rabbits in abundance, groves of trees, a lady presenting a ring to the lover who sits beside her, many armed knights, Saladin on horseback attended by Saracens; and, to complete the list, the Emperor Charlemagne seated in his chair of state, his sword in his right hand, his shield on his left arm, and his feet resting on a lion, with Saracen banners around, and on the rim is inscribed these sentences: "A loyal life will I lead, for by loyalty a man is honoured. He who is loyal all his life is honoured without reproach." Under various names, such as godets, gobelets, flascons, boutailles, quartes, coupes, pintes, and pots, these drinking-vessels were all, more or less, elaborately ornamented. It was the same with the salières (which must by no means be confounded with modern salt-cellars, however graceful the form of the latter), the nefs (or ships), the mestiers (candlesticks), the chauderons (tureens), the chauffettes (basins), the tranchois (trenchers), and the escuelles (plates): all that ingenuity could devise or wealth create went to the construction of a service of plate in the middle ages.

OUR POISONOUS WILD FLOWERS.

The notion is so prevalent amongst the poor that free use may be made of the herbs of the field as medicine, the practice is also so common among children of munching leaves, or roots, or berries, of wild plants among which they walk in summer time; that we are very much obliged to Mr. Johnson, the botanical lecturer at Guy's Hospital, for having published, for the use of the general public, a short and simple account of the British poisonous plants, with a picture of each to stand instead of a technical description.

There are the buttercups, to begin with, so caustic that the hands of children gathering them are sometimes inflamed, or even blistered. The deep colour of butter was ascribed to the eating of these flowers by the cows, wherefore they were called butter-

flowers and buttercups; but the cows know better than to eat them. The poisonous principle in buttercups is volatile, and disappears out of the herb in drying. Buttercups, therefore, are not only harmless when mixed with the grass in making hay, but even help to make the fodder nutritive by the large quantity of mucilage their stems contain.

The wild anemones, which belong also to the crowfoot tribe, are poisonous, and so is monkshood, or wolf's-bane, as by this time we have reason enough to know. Every part of this last-named herb is poisonous, and because its young leaves are like parsley, and its old root is like horse-radish, many have eaten it and died. It ought never to be planted for the sake of its bright flowers in the same bed with any sort of kitchen herbs.

The stinking hellebore, bear's foot, or setterwort, the green hellebore, and the black hellebore, or Christmas rose, produce vomiting, purging, burning pain, convulsions, death. They will tempt nobody to eat them for pleasure, but hellebore is used in the country for worm medicines by many a well-meaning quack; and, says Dr. Taylor, "if persons are not always killed by such worm medicines, it must be a very fortunate circumstance."

The effect of poppies is well known. It is the large white garden poppy, from the seed-vessel of which opium is obtained: there is but little opium in the red poppies of the roadside and the field; enough, however, to do mischief. The common celandine is violently irritant, and it may poison people. On one occasion, a town servant removed to the country, garnished dishes with its young curled leaves instead of parsley.

It may be thought that we are safe among legumes, but we are not. We may eat beans and peas, but we had better avoid eating laburnum. The poisonous principle of the laburnum, cytisine, is contained in some other leguminous plants. In the laburnum it kills easily. Three little girls in Herefordshire, finding that a high wind had shaken down a great many laburnum pods, collected them in play, and ate the seeds as peas. They were children of from five to seven years old. Two died the same night in convulsions; the third recovered, only after a lingering illness of some months. There is much poison also in laburnum bark. The seeds of the yellow and of the rough-podded vetchling may produce headache and sickness.

The wild flower of the cucumber tribe, common in England, the bryony, is a powerful and highly irritant purgative. It is a quack herb medicine; its red berries produce very ill effects on children who may chance to eat them.

In the parsley tribe there are some familiar wild flowers, very apt to be eaten, and very far from eatable. Carrots and parsnips, celery and fennel, belong to this family, and they are good to eat, of course; but, there are other plants of the kind which careless people may mistake for parsley, celery, or parsnip, and die of the blunder. Hemlock-leaves have been eaten for parsley-leaves, although much darker and more glossy. Cows and goats will not eat hemlock, but sheep eat it unharmed. It kills man, when taken in a fatal dose, by its strong action on the nerves, producing insensibility and palsy of the arms and legs. As a drug, it is most dangerous, except in skilful hands.

Then there is fools' parsley. A child of five years old has been poisoned by eating the somewhat bulbous roots of this plant, by mistake for young turnips. She died within an hour. Somebody put the leaves into soup instead of parsley. Vomiting followed, with at last lockjaw; death within twenty-four hours. The roots of water-hemlock or cowbane have been eaten by children, for parsnips, with death as the consequence. But, the most virulent of all the poisons of this sort is the water-dropwort, common on the banks of the Thames. When not in flower it resembles celery, and the roots may be mistaken easily for parsnip-roots. Some years ago, a number of convicts were at work upon the river bank, near Woolwich, and found a quantity of this plant. Seventeen of them ate it. Nine, shortly afterwards, went into convulsions; one died in five minutes; another in a quarter-of-an-hour; a third in an hour; and a fourth a few minutes later. Two others died in the course of a few days. The fine-leaved water-dropwort and the common dropwort are less poisonous, but not to be eaten without considerable danger.

Now we come to the potato family; even the potato itself, when the roots are exposed to air and light, developing much of the active principle and little of the starch, may kill and has killed the person eating it. The leaves and stem, too, are narcotic always, and still more the berries. But, the tobacco is, of this family, safer to smoke than eat; a very little of it eaten has sufficed to destroy life. The deadly nightshade, too, is a fair lady to be shunned; the

> Belladonna with false-painted fruits
> Alluring to destroy.

A very small number of the dark purple nightshade berries, fair to the eye and sweet to the taste, will kill a child. It is on record that only half a berry has sometimes proved fatal. The root and leaves are not less deadly than the berries. Ten years ago, some of these nightshade berries were in ignorance hawked about London streets for fruit. Two persons died in consequence, and others had narrow escapes. The bitter-sweet or woody nightshade, so abundant in our hedges, has also to be avoided; and the black or garden nightshade has proved fatal to several.

Henbane is not uncommon in some parts

of England, in waste ground near towns and villages. The whole herb poisons man, though it may be eaten without hurt by cattle. It causes delirium and stupor, convulsions, even insanity. Two fatal cases are recorded. Even of this herb the roots have been eaten in soup for parsnips. Dr. Houlton relates that they were once eaten, by the same mistake, for supper in a monastery. All who had taken any were affected in the night and during the next day. One monk got up at midnight and tolled for matins; others obeyed the summons; and of those who did so some could not read, others repeated what had not been set down in their breviaries. The thorn apple has effects so deadly that in America it has been called the devil's apple. It is said that thorn apples were used to produce the prophetic paroxysms at the Delphian shrine.

In the figwort tribe there is no plant so dangerous as fox-glove. It is a powerful and valuable medicine to the physician, but one of the most perilous of herbs in the hands of the quack. Its most peculiar effect is that which it has upon the action of the heart, reducing to a wonderful degree the number of its beats.

Mezereon is very dangerous. Its scarlet berries, bright as currants, shining against lively green foliage, are apt to tempt a child. Four or five will produce serious illness, more may kill. Spurge-laurel is not less dangerous. A decoction of the root and bark is sometimes used, and when used, always with great risk, as a worm-medicine.

The spurges have a juice so hot and acrid that one might suppose they never would be eaten by mistake. A boy of six, however, ate the petty-spurge and died. A boy of fourteen ate, in thoughtless daring of his schoolfellows, several plants of the sun-spurge, and died in three hours in distressing sufferings. Herb Mercury and wild spinach have also had their victims. Herb Paris has not yet caused fatal poisoning, but symptoms caused in a child by eating a few of the berries as black currants indicate that it has properties similar to those of deadly nightshade.

Black bryony is sometimes given by quacks in powder and decoction. One dose produces death in the most painful form. Wherever it grows, children should especially be warned against eating its scarlet berries.

Daffodils and lilies also swell the list of poisonous wild-flowers. Even the pleasant odour of the daffodil and the narcissus causes headache, if it be breathed for any length of time. Infants have been dangerously affected by the mere carrying to the mouth of the flower of the daffodil, and swallowing some portions of it. The narcissus is more deadly than the daffodil, and gets its name from the Greek word (narkê) for stupor or insensibility. It is unsafe to eat either jonquils or snowdrops. There is some poison, too, in the wild hyacinth, and much and deadly poison—of a sort called veratrin—in the meadow-saffron. A few years ago, a woman picked up in Covent Garden Market some bulbs of the meadow-saffron which a herbalist had thrown away; she took them for onions, ate them, and died shortly afterwards. A man swallowed some seeds incautiously, and quickly died. The leaves are avoided by horses but eaten by deer and cattle, who, sometimes in the spring, when the juices are most virulent, die by them. They seem to become wholesome when dried in hay.

Of the arum, which is called also lords and ladies, or cuckoo-pint, when it is fresh, all parts are dangerous. Three children ate some of the leaves; their tongues became swollen, swallowing was difficult, one died in twelve and one in seventeen days; the third recovered. The poison, which is very acrid in the roots, may be dissipated by heat. In the Isle of Portland, where the arum is abundant, its roots steeped in water, baked and powdered, are eaten under the name of Portland sago.

Of poisoning with yew and yew-berries, cases are numerous. Wherever there are yew hedges in gardens frequented by children, the berries ought to be removed before they ripen. There is poison in elder flowers, leaves, and roots; even the berries, when eaten as they are found upon the tree, may produce vomiting and purging.

Sorrel owes its agreeable sharpness to oxalic acid in the binoxalate of potash wherein it abounds. It is good in salad, and a few leaves may be eaten without hurt; but, serious illness may result from eating it in quantity.

The same is to be said of the kernels of stone-fruits, which are flavoured with Prussic acid. Only a very few are to be eaten without risk. A little girl, aged five, ate a great number of the kernels of sweet cherries. Her brother, a few years older, also ate some. Next day, the girl was in a stupor, from which nothing could rouse her. She died about forty hours after the kernels had been eaten. The boy was ill for a month, and then recovered.

HOW WE LOST OUR MINISTER.

Our village is on the seacoast, far from the main roads and the towns; we have a harbour for small fishing smacks, and do a smart trade in whiting pout and salmon peel, but we cannot, with strict propriety, be termed commercial. There is nothing to attract the great world from their enjoyments and dissipations in favour of Barnley Combe, except its natural loveliness; perhaps our simple manners may have their charms for such as have been preyed upon for successive years by lodging-house keepers of Brighton, who have been bitten in the face and eyelids down at Margate, who have given up trying to persuade themselves that what they smelt at

Southsea was not drains. We are at present unextortionate, cleanly, and of good savour, and we have done our best "to meet the polished requirements of that aristocracy which patronises us, summer after summer, more and more." (See the new advertisement of our bazaar, where a wheel of fortune has been recently erected regardless of expense.) We take in at each hotel a second-day's newspaper; we have added to a library, which was before considered but little inferior to that of the British Museum, several modern publications; and I do not desire to exalt this journal with a sense of its own merits unduly, when I say that there is an intention—an expressed intention—on the part of the committee of management to order it monthly upon trial. We are anxious to please everybody and to offend no one. The Honourable Rapid (by which name, in an ignorance of the terms, although in full consciousness of the blessings, of hereditary title, we were accustomed to call him), one of a party of collegians studying here, informed us that there was nothing in literature worth reading now except the Mysteries of the City, an illustrated serial not binding itself to be finished in any particular amount of numbers, and Lady Clearstarch swept out of the reading-room, and nearly out of Barnley Combe as well, because it was offered to her as an improving volume. We have built four bathing-machines—two for ladies, and two for gentlemen—and there is a little gritty coffin in the possession of the postmistress, wherein such as desire it can obtain a warm salt-water bath. Paths have been cut in our hills, and saddled donkeys placed conveniently at the feet of them. Seats are set advantageously fronting the best views—and alpenstocks, which the guide-book says are absolutely indispensable, "the sharp gradients of the Barnley Combe foot-roads being inexpressibly trying to the pedestrian"—are exposed for sale at the barber's, to the wonder of the aboriginal inhabitants. We retained a literary gentleman (of great provincial reputation) for the purpose of compiling that volume and of eulogising Barnley Combe therein—and he has done it with a vengeance; when I read about our stupendous heights, gigantic fir forests, and spooming cataract, I feel—if I may be allowed the expression—positively Alpine. Like the man who had talked prose all his life without knowing it, I begin to be aware of what a romantic region I have been hitherto a denizen. The surgeon tells me he has hopes of one of the parish children having a regular goitre when she grows up, in which case her fortune and ours will indeed be made. How we shall dilate upon "the population (alas!) paying the usual penalty for the enormous altitude at which they live, and for the gigantic character of their magnificent scenes!" There is "A picturesque recluse," the guide-book says, "who having made his solitary abode for years in a cleft of Barnley cliff, now earns a scanty subsistence, in addition to the roots and the spring with which he has been so long contented, by awakening the slumberous echoes with a Switzer horn." This is, in reality, the boy who should be minding my pigs in the beech-wood, but who prefers to sit upon a very dangerous ledge amongst the rocks, practising upon his swine-call, and who consumes more beer and bacon when he comes home at night, after doing nothing, than any grown man in the village, after doing a great deal. My gardener tells me that he could get a shilling a head many a day if I would let him show people over my half acre of lawn and shrubbery during the season. "Here," this is the guide-book again, "Art seems to have been the chief operator in laying out with taste the walks, the flowers, the plantations"—there are altogether five-and-forty trees, including gooseberry trees. "There," it continues, referring to my neighbour's (the coast-guardsman's grounds), for which he does not care an anchor button, and which he suffers to run to rack and ruin, "Nature has had the principal management—the dark, ivy-mantled rock, the overhanging wood, the spooming cataract, are the prevailing characteristics."

There is nothing in Barnley Combe which loses in description, I think; nothing either in illustration, to judge by the violent engravings, prints, and water-colour sketches of it exhibited in all the neighbouring towns, stuck against the sides of public conveyances, obtruded upon the heads of note-paper, and stamped on mugs, and jugs, and work-boxes, and fans for presents. We do what we can to become famous and popular every way. When homœopathy was the rage, our chemist—who is likewise the grocer, and the baker, and the wine and beer merchant, all in an infinitesimal way—became a convert to the next-to-nothing remedies at once, still issuing to the benighted, castor-oil, if they liked it, by the gallon. When the water-cure got to be fashionable, our doctor had pipes laid on to his own house from everywhere immediately, and would put you, if you preferred it, in a couple of wet sheets, just as soon as recommend a warming-pan and antimonial wine. Our rector, Mr. England, who 'expects every man to do *his* duty," and dislikes much personal clerical exertion, has done his very best to procure pleasing curates, and has persevered, in spite of many disappointments—the high, the broad, the low, the slow, the no-church have all been tried at Barnley Combe, and all for different offences have been found guilty and condemned. Ladies of high degree have sailed out of our very pews before the winds of distasteful doctrine. Officers of state have gone to sleep, as though they were not taking a holiday from their respective duties; and the rector himself had once to listen to a denunciatory harangue, of which he, the incumbent, was the unmistakable object, and

which extended considerably beyond his usual dinner-hour.

At last Barnley Combe was blest with a fitting minister in the Rev. Peony Flush. In the season, and out of the season also, he was equally earnest and efficient; and was not only patronised by the aristocracy, but beloved by the poor. Although he was my dear and intimate friend indeed, it is not through the prejudice of friendship that I assert he was the friend of us all. His figure was tall and thin to attenuity; he was nearly bald, with a complexion like a girl's, and an expression like a saint's; as dispassionate, as moral, as noble, as simply religious a being as ever walked this world of sin and vanity. I think he understood, sympathised with, palliated, pitied, rebuked, such as were the contrary, in a manner that the most universal and charitable Christianity could alone inspire. His simplicity was a real nobility; and, from never having mixed with the world (save in a peculiarly secluded university life), he was quite untainted with that false and degrading respect that is so generally paid to "position," without regard to wisdom or to virtue. Briton as he was, and yet exempt from the national foible, it is not to be supposed that he had no weakness; he was the shyest—the most painfully modest—man I ever knew; and he oftentimes suffered in consequence most cruelly. He was the man who went most out of his way to avoid hurting people's feelings, and for the sake of delicacy; and, as usually happens, he was treading upon people's mental toes continuously. When he first came among us, and was furnishing his cottage, and getting introduced to his future parishioners, I remember calling with him (on our way to the market-town) upon a farmer who had a club-foot. It was not long before poor Flush, who was not aware of this, and was very near-sighted, observed with a smile, that our host seemed to take excellent care to keep himself out of the dirt among the lanes. "What a sensible boot that is of yours, Mr. Layman; why, it's treble soled!" And, before he had recovered himself from the flame of blushes into which he burst upon the discovery of this mistake, he informed Mrs. Layman and her four daughters, that the object of our expedition into the town was to procure him (Peony Flush) "a pair of comfortable drawers," meaning thereby a chest, I suppose, but sending the whole company into shrieks of laughter, and suffusing himself from top to toe with a beautiful rose colour. These sort of things, he confessed to me, annoyed him for months afterwards, oppressing him like sins; and I could not forbear remarking, "Why, Flush, how will you ever have the face to propose to the future Mrs. P. F.?" He rose-coloured in such a manner at this, that I said, "Come, Peony, tell us all about it at once, do," which accordingly, after a little pressing, he did.

"I was indeed," he began, "once engaged to be married I believe, (how I went so far as that is a marvel to me still), but an incident of so frightful a character took place as to put the matter entirely out of the question. I was a young undergraduate, spending the summer with a reading party at the Irish lakes, when I met with—with Lucy, and got, in short, to be accepted. She was residing with her mother, in the same hotel in Killarney as ourselves, and we all met every day. We boated on the lake together, and fished, and sang, and read. We landed on the wooded islands in the soft summer evenings, to take our tea in gipsey fashion, and to sketch; but she and I mostly whispered—not about love at all, as I remember, but of the weather and the rubric; only it seemed so sweet to sink our voices and speak low and soft. Once, in a party over the moors, while I was leading her pony over some boggy ground, I caught her hand by mistake instead of her bridle, and she did not snatch it away. It was the heyday and the prime of my life, my friend, and that youth of the spirit which no power can ever more renew. I knew what she felt, and what would please her, as soon as the feeling and the wish themselves were born. Our thought—my thought at least, 'leapt out to wed with thought, ere thought could wed itself with speech.' She took a fancy to a huge mastiff dog belonging to a fisherman; and I bought it for her at once, although it was terribly savage, and, (except for Lucy's liking it) not either good or beautiful. Its name, also—the only one it would answer to, and sometimes it would not to that—was Towser, not a name for a lady's pet at all, and scarcely for a gentleman's. There was a little secluded field, hedged in by a coppice, which sloped into the lake, about a mile from the hotel; and there Lucy agreed (for the first time) to meet me alone. I was to be there, before breakfast, at eight o'clock in the morning, and you may be sure I was there at six—with Towser. Perhaps I was never happier than at that particular time. The universal nature seemed in harmony with my blissful feelings. The sun shone out bright and clear, so that the fresh morning breezes could scarcely cool the pleasant throbbing of my blood; but the blue rippling waves of the lake looked irrepressibly tempting, and I could not resist a swim. Just a plunge and out again, thought I; for though I had such plenty of time to spare, I determined to be dressed and ready for the interview an hour at least before the appointed time. Lucy might, like myself, be a little earlier; and at all events, with such an awful consequence in possible apprehension, I would run the shadow of a risk. 'Mind my clothes, mind them,' said I to Towser (who took his seat thereon, at once, sagaciously enough), for I had heard of such things as clothes being stolen from unconscious dippers before them, with results not to be

thought of; and in I went. I remember the delight of that bath even to this day, the glow, the freshness, the luxurious softness of each particular wave, just as the last view which his eyes rested on is painted on the memory of one who has been stricken blind, or the last heard melody is treasured in that of a man stunned deaf by a fall; it was my last perfect pleasure, and succeeded by a shock that I shall never, I think, quite get over. When I had bathed as long as I judged to be prudent, I landed and advanced towards the spot where my garments and Towser lay; as I did so, every individual hair upon his back seemed to bristle with fury, his eyes kindled coals of fire; he gave me notice by a low determined growl that he would spring on me and tear me into fragments if I approached nearer; it was evident that he did not recognise me, in the least, without my clothes. 'Tow, Tow, Tow, Tow, Tow,' said I pleasantly, 'good old Tow, you remember me;' but the brute, like the friend whom we have known in a better day, and appeal to when in indifferent apparel, only shook his head in a menacing manner and showed his teeth the more. 'Towser, be quiet, sir; how dare you—Tow, Tow, Tow—— Towser—(here he nearly had a bit of my calf off)—you nasty, brutal dog; go away, sir,—go; ain't you ashamed of yourself?" Drops of foam oozed through the teeth of the ferocious monster as he stood up with tail erect at these reproving words, but he manifested no sign of remorse or sorrow. My situation became serious in the extreme; what if he chose to sit there, on my personal apparel, until——? At this idea, too terrible to be concluded, a profuse perspiration broke out all over me. Presently, feeling a little cold, I went back into the lake again to consider what was to be done, and resolving the fell design of enticing Towser into the water and there drowning him. Abuse and flattery being equally thrown away upon him, I tried stones; I heaved at him with all my force the largest pebbles I could select, the majority of which he evaded by leaping from side to side, and those which struck him rendered him so furious that I believe he would have killed and eat me if he could, whether I was dressed or not, but he would not venture into the water after me still. At last, the time drawing on apace for the appointed interview which I had once looked forward to with such delight and expectation, I was fain, in an agony of shame and rage, to hide myself in a dry ditch in the neighbouring copse, where I could see what took place without being seen, and there I covered myself over, like a babe in the wood, with leaves. Presently my Lucy came down, a trifle more carefully dressed than usual and looking all grace and modesty; the dog began to howl as she drew near; she saw him and she saw my clothes, and the notion that I was drowned (I could see it in her expressive countenance) flashed upon her at once; for one instant she looked as though about to faint, and the next she sped off again to the hotel with the speed of a deer. Gracious Heavens! I decided upon rescuing a portion of my garments at least, or upon perishing in the attempt, and rushed out of the thicket for the purpose; but my courage failed me as I neared the savage animal and I found myself (in some confused and palpitating manner) back in my dry ditch again with the sensation of a loss of blood and pain; my retreat had not been effected—perhaps, because there was nothing to cover it—without considerable loss, and the beast had bitten me severely. I protest that, from that moment, frightful as my position was, it did not move me so much as the reflection of the honors that would be showered down on that vile creature. I knew that he would be considered by Lucy and the rest as a sort of dog of Montargis, an affectionate and sagacious creature, watching patiently at his appointed post for the beloved master that should never again return to him. Presently they all came back, Lucy and her mother and all the maid-servants from the inn, besides my fellow-students and fishermen with dragnets, and a medical man with blankets and brandy (how I envied the blankets and the brandy!) As I expected, neither the women's cries nor the men's labour in vain distressed me half so much as the patting and caressing of Towser; if she could have only known when she dropped those tears upon his cruel nose that there was a considerable quantity of human flesh—my flesh—at that moment lying in his stomach in an undigested state! I could not repress a groan of horror and indignation: "Hush, hush," said Lucy, and there was a silence, through which I could distinctly hear Towser licking his chops. I was desperate by this time, and holloaed out to my friend Sanford—'Sanford and nobody else'—to come into the copse with a blanket. I remember nothing more distinctly. Immediately peals of laughter, now smothered, now breaking irrepressibly forth; expressions of thankfulness, of affection, of sympathy beginning—but never finished—burst in upon, as it were, by floods of merriment; and the barking, the eternal barking, of that execrable dog. I left Killarney that same evening; Lucy, and the mother of Lucy, and my fellow-students, and the abominable Towser; I left them for good and all; and that was how my engagement was broken off, and why there is no Mrs. Peony Flush," concluded the curate, who had turned from rose-colour to deep carnation, and from that to almost black, during the recital.

I felt for my poor friend deeply, as many others did to whom I told this under the seal of secrecy, and who revealed it to their families. In place of the religious book-markers, with Bibles and crosses and crowns worked on them, which used to be rained

upon Mr. Flush during the summer months from anonymous but not altogether unknown hands, he now received similar encouraging tokens of a more earthly character: a wreath of orange flowers, with "Hope on, Hope ever" under it, in floss silk, and a vignette, on perforated cardboard, of Robert Bruce and the Spider, with a mediæval illumination, signifying "Never despair;" he was also presented by some humorous artist with the miniature of a dog couchant upon a heap of something, and "Semper fidelis" underneath. His misfortune, however, was in a fair way of being forgotten, but for what occurred last summer. Barnley Combe had never had so great an influx of company as then. Our hotel was filled to overflow; two of our riding-donkeys died from exhaustion, a third edition was called for of the guide-book, and the bathing-machines were entirely reserved for the ladies' use.

It was not this last circumstance, for Peony Flush never bathed, but the first which interfered with our good curate's comfort. The Nobleman's Rest being full, its landlady sent her respects to Mr. Flush, and would he afford her the temporary loan of a spare room in his house for a widow and her daughter who had written for apartments the day before, and were coming on that evening in the expectation of finding them? To refuse to perform a kindness never entered into the good fellow's feeling heart, but this request vexed him mightily. The information that the ladies were of a sumptuous character, and travelled with two riding-horses, as well as their own carriage, affected him nothing. If they had been pedestrians, and were about to appear in a walking-grove of bandboxes, they would have alarmed him quite as much. He was not sure if it would not be indelicate in him to put his boots outside the door at night, and he gave orders that his linen should be removed—half dry—from the lines in the back-garden. It would be a relief to him, he said, if I would reside in the house during the stay of the two visitors; and, at all events, I must dine with him the first evening, which I agreed to do. The curate's dinners were rather neat; his housekeeper—who perfectly understood him and was not altogether without hope, I think, of luring him down from respect to matrimony—had a way of anointing duck with lemon, which, before I feasted at the Dovecot, I had met with only in books. I therefore judiciously rode out a few miles in the afternoon in search of an appetite. There was a good one to be got generally on the Bridle-road by the sea-coast, which cuts through the sheep and cattle-pastures, and I chose that way. It is much intersected with small white gates which mark the boundaries of the fields, and one of these it puzzled me a good deal to open. The day was hot and my horse was fidgety, so that I knew better than to get off and risk not getting on again; but I could not undo the spring-bolt anyhow. While I was wheeling and reaching, and changing from a red to a white heat, and had got from "dear me" and "botheration," to "confound the thing!" I was startled by a rather shrillish voice from the other side of the gate, and up came a lady upon a showy bay at a hard gallop, with a "By your leave, sir, for a moment"—and the showy bay and his feminine burthen dashed over the five-barred together, like a monstrous bird—just shaving my head, as I should think, by about a quarter of an inch. Secondly, came a groom with another bay; and, thirdly, a huge mastiff-dog (who made a snap at me in the air) with another bay; and in a moment I was left alone in a cloud of dust.

I took the remainder of my ride in peace; and having accomplished my object, returned to Barnley Combe. My appetite was of that nicety that five minutes either way would have deteriorated it materially; but, I well knew that Mrs. Softairs was punctual to an instant. As I trod her well-known staircase I felt as confident of all things being well, as a human being can feel. The odour of the stuffing seemed to salute my nostrils. I had decided on a wing and a slice of the breast. Alas! the cloth was not even laid upon the dining-table, but there was a little folded note addressed to me instead:

"Dear Friend,—Adieu for ever. By the time you read this I shall be far away. It seems like a fatality; but while I have life I will resist it. L. is in the house. L. and her mother—and the abominable——"

A low growl here arrested my attention. The mastiff dog was at the door who had snapped at me in the afternoon without effect. He said, as plainly as he could speak, that he was determined to make up for his disappointment on the present occasion. I was resolving to sell my life dearly, when the rather shrillish voice again came up the stairs, and in at the window, and down the chimney, as it seemed to me, at once: "Tow, Tow, Tow, Tow, Tow! Good little dog! Come to Lu Lu!" The creature obeyed. I suppose there was some other dinner awaiting him below, and I stole softly away in safety.

Never again did I visit that snug parlour. Never again was Peony Flush beheld by Barnley-Combian eye. I recognised him, I think, however, in the naval intelligence column of the Times newspaper, as the Reverend P. Flush, appointed chaplain to her Majesty's ship Virgo, bound for Hong Kong; where mastiff pups are fricasseed and stewed and baked in pies before they attain maturity.

"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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SEA-GARDENS.

COUNTRY folks are justly proud of their gardens, but coast folks have gardens upon the land and in the sea. The hardy sea-faring populations of the coasts and islands, from the North Cape to the Bay of Biscay, call the submarine valleys the gardens. Lovelier gardens have never, indeed, been made horticultural shows of, at Ghent, at Paris, or at Chiswick. Fashion does well, when upon horticultural fête days it sends its votaries upon the green, smooth-shaven swards, and into the fruit and flower-adorned tents; under the shady alleys, and into the glass-palaces, where are collected and displayed the wonders of the vegetable world—from earth and air, the rivers and the lakes. The contempt of ignorance, meanwhile, persuades most town folks that the gardens of coast folks are composed of weeds and worms. Ignorance and contempt always run into each other in a serpentine circle. The most beautiful plants known in botany have been called weeds, and the loveliest creatures known in zoology have been called worms. Fashion, when its leaders shall know what is known to sea-side observers, will probably launch its elegant crowds in cushioned and streamered gondolas upon the smooth summer seas, to admire the glorious gardens whose plants now wave unseen around our coast. The green ulva, the olive laminaria, the rose ceramieæ, the herbivore and carnivore conchylions; stony plants and stony animals,—animal stones, animal flowers, animal vegetables, vegetal animals;—life, in short, in a singularly lovely flora—life in a bizarrely beautiful, a sublimely wonderful fauna—life where the mineral, vegetal, and animal worlds blend mysteriously—life in the ocean, which is the realm of life,—makes the unique but various charm of the submarine scenery, which the sea-kings of old called expressly the gardens—the sea-gardens. Decidedly we must have ocean floral fêtes. Fashion is a tyrant, always demanding the invention of new pleasures, and here is one worth many, the suggestion of fêtes to view the gardens of the sea.

The summer day is long and fine. The boats are hearts of oak, and the boatmen, of course, are jolly tars. There is not a man or a woman, a boy or a girl of us all whose pulse is not quickened, and whose eyes do not sparkle, at the sight of the familiar bit of silk called the Union Jack. We are sailing off a granite coast, but inshore, and we look down. Why, fathoms beneath us, wherever our eyes turn, we gaze upon a floral-show, a garden of the sea. There are grass-green plants, olive-brown plants, and purple-rosy plants. The ground of white and yellow sand, here and there, throws well up their colours, and defines their forms beautifully. The undulations of the water affect them but gently, and they wave

> Like sister-flowers of one sweet shade
> Which the same breeze does blow.

Every variety of hue refreshes the eyes. Moreover, the sunlight which sparkles upon the surface of the water descends down upon the gardens with a softened, unearthly and wavering radiance. No wonder photography should be trying to seize the lights and shades of this scenery:

> Earth has not anything to show more fair:

There are ash-coloured, rust-coloured, smoke-coloured, reddish-brown, greenish-blue, dusky-green, iris-hued, hyaline, diaphanous, pellucid, and metallically lustrous marine plants. Persons who must needs know the why and the wherefore of all they see, are indeed puzzled to account for the colours of the marine plants. The law of the coloration of land-plants is, the further they are from the light the paler they grow. The law of the coloration of sea-plants is, the further they grow from the light the more brilliantly ruddy are their colours. The supposition that the colouring rays act where the luminous rays scarcely reach, is neither a probable nor an explanatory hypothesis. Every submarine zone has varied colours. No region, tenanted by life, is without them. The fact remains, account for it as we may; in the darkest depths are the brightest colours. A very common stony plant, erroneously called Corallina officinalis, the purple chalky plant, becomes white when exposed to the sunlight. The pepper dulse of the Scotch East Coast, the Laurencia pinnatifida of Lamouroux (pinnatifida, because like a cut feather, and Laurencia to honour a Monsieur de Laurencie), a pungent, appetising, and agreeable

condiment, when it grows near low-water mark is purple, and near high-water mark, yellowish or greenish. The jelly-weed (Condrus crispus) is similarly affected. The smooth-little-pitcher plant (Ceramium rubrum), so called from the appearance of its capsules, is found of every colour, from red to white, according to its habitat. The colours of many sea-plants perish the moment they are removed from the sea-water. Heath-like sack-chain (Cystoseira ericoides) loses, the instant it quits the water, the rich phosphoric greens and blues which play and flicker upon it in the sea-gardens.

Looking down from a boat, the observer can scarcely attend to more than the general effects of the ocean scenery. Exhilarated by the air, and delighted by novel loveliness, he is scarcely in a mood to scrutinise the form of particular plants. The general aspect of the sea-gardens is brown. Social in their habits, and numerous as individuals, the fourteen British species of brown plants cover more surface of tidal rocks than all the other four or five hundred kinds. From them it is that, as the colour green paints the terrestrial, the colour brown paints the littoral vegetation. Unlike the terrestrial meadows, the aquatic fields are brown,—brown as the mountain heaths—brown as the winter woods. While the name of the savans, Laminaria, feebly hints that the fronds of certain brown plants are thin plates, the name of the Scotch Highlanders hits off the description of their appearance by calling them sea-wands. Forests of brown sea-wands bend to the undulations of the tides upon the exposed brows of submarine rocks around the coasts of the British islands. Fuci—the Greek name for sea-weeds—generally has been applied by the savans to the abundant brown plants with air-bladders in their fronds. Scotch coast folks call an edible species of them badder-locks (bladder-locks) and, indeed, they are locks of bladders. At low tides extensive belts of rocks, covered by brown plants, when left dry and supine by the sea, are described as black rocks. The entwined condition of the plants is, I suppose, described by the English name—tangle. When left by the sea a strangely tangled mass is formed by intertwined sea-girdles or sea-wands (Laminaria digitata), sea-furbelows (Laminaria bulbosa), sea-belts (Laminaria saccharina) badder-locks (Alaria esculenta) and knobbed wrack or crackers (Fucus nodosus). Crackers will remind coast boys, generally, of the times upon times when they threw this plant into the blazing evening fire, and produced explosions to the astonishment of the feminine household.

When sea-wands and sea-furbelows overshadow deep, steep, rock-pools, the sides of the rocks are generally decked with rosy plants of luxuriant colours. The land-roses front the sun, the red plants of the sea court the shade. In the darkest pools are the most beautiful things. Most of the British red plants grow only to about five or six inches in length. The spotted shiny-leaf (Nitophyllum punctatum) has, however, been found five feet in height and three in breadth. The braided hair of the Greeks (Plocamum coccineum) is a very common purple plant which grows in tufts in open spots in the pools.

When looking down into a rock valley, the brows of the rocks are seen to be darkened by brown plants, their sides festooned by red plants, and the exposed sunny spots tenanted by green plants. There is all the cunning of nature in the harmony of their forms and colours. Green thread-cells, called confervæ, grow wherever there is humidity. The thread-cells of the sea are similar to the confervæ of the land. Oyster-green, or laver, is the most common of green marine plants. The glossy, oval, flat fronds of the short, stumpy ulva are exceedingly graceful in their own homes. They are the plants of the water especially, being named ulva from the Celtic word ul (water). The green intestine-like plants, Enteramorpha, are as widely distributed. Conferva, enteramorpha, and ulva, are seen everywhere upon the shores of the globe.

Lamouroux, the man to whom we are indebted for most of our sea-weed lore, has divided the sea-gardens into the green, the olive, and the red zones. Just when we sail out between the pier-heads of our harbour, or step beyond high tide mark, we have entered the green zone. When sailing above the tidal rocks we are above the olive zone. When off shore, and beyond low water-mark, we are floating over the red zone.

The forms of the ocean flora are as various as their colours. There are marine plants which can be seen only by aid of the microscope; and there are marine plants whose stems rival the masts of the tallest ships. Some of them are just strings of little bags adhering to each other, end to end. Some are nothing but branched threads. The tissue of many of them expands into broad, flat fronds. There are a few of the marine plants which seem to have leaves of netted lace. There are silky, jelly-like, gelatinous, leathery, gristly, woody, streaked, and veined fronds. There are fronds like hair, like twine, and like thread. There are fronds which are like tubes, like spathes, like bags, like kidneys, like hands, like eggs, like tongues, like combs, like lances, like spears, like fans, like sickles, like swords, like wedges, like teeth, and like hearts. Fronds are cleft, bi-lobed, forked, jointed, tied, notched, fringed, wavy, rounded at the base, rounded at the top, rolled together, rolled upwards, and rolled backwards. There are tufted and there are level-topped fronds. Some are laminated, and some are whorled. Who is there who has not seen beautiful collections of sea-weeds? Many persons have doubtless turned

over the coloured illustrations in the works of Dr. Greville of Edinburgh and Dr. Harvey of Dublin. Whoever has hung over volumes of figures and specimens during long and delightful evenings, has found his imagination restoring the plants to their habitats, and forming fancy pictures of the beauty and wonder imparted by this sweetly wild flora to the gardens of the sea.

Lamouroux says, sea plants are distributed upon lines of coast at a common depth of water. Andouin and Milne Edwards found a similar distribution of marine animals. Nearly thirty years have elapsed since they published their labours. During recent years, the Dredging Committee of the British Association have explored many parts of the seaboard of the British islands. Hundreds of zealous observers have contributed to show the distribution of vegetal and animal life upon the coasts of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

Prior to talking about the animals of the coast—for the sea-gardens are both botanical and zoological gardens—permit me, in passing, to wipe out an imputation upon the fair fame of the sea-weeds. They have been called the Cryptogames—the plants who marry clandestinely. Humble they may be, but they are not mean enough to marry clandestinely; and the only ground for the imputation is their aversion to show and ostentation. No doubt they make no display of cups (calices) or coronets (corolla). There is no flaunting of gay flags and streamers, called sepals and petals. They do not spread in the sun the gorgeous hues of their connubial curtains. They are far enough, indeed, from firing off pistols on the happy occasion, like the pistol-plant (Pilea callitrichoïdes). But there is a difference between modesty and secrecy; and the sea-plants are guilty of nothing clandestine.

Ulva and balani, or oyster-green and acorn-shells mark the highest zone of the coast. Every twelve hours the waves and spray of high-water nourish the vegetal and animal life of the ulva or acorn zone. Balani is the Greek for acorns. The name acorn-shell was doubtless suggested by the general resemblance of the shells to the acorns of the oak. When country cousins first see the balani, they take them for droll, dry, dead scurf, almost akin to the lichens, often their neighbours on the shore. Strange creatures indeed are these balani, and stranger still are some of the habitats in which they are found. I kept a colony of them in a basin of sea-water for several months. When I found them in the sea, they were floating upon a cork bung, and all the trouble I had with them was to let them float in the basin instead of the ocean. The sea-acorns are particularly fond of establishing themselves around the eyes of whales. What they seem most to like in regard to a locality or habitat is, frequent washings from the sea spray, with occasional immersions for short periods. When the whale spouts, they have plenty of spray, and when he dives they have brief dips; and thus they show us a curious analogy between the ulva zone and the vicinity of the eyes of the whale. Sandars Rang says balani are found under the umbrellas of the medusæ. They are also found upon turtles. Small in Europe, the acorn-shells attain a considerable size on the shores of the tropical seas. The naturalists have tried with small success to give descriptive names to the sea-acorns. The sessile and stalked acorns have been called cirripeda —the beard-feet. The word feet is not happily applied to animals without locomotion in their adult state. There are naturalists who talk of their hairy or ciliated arms. They call arms the machines which others call feet. M. de Blainville tried to hit them off by calling them nematopoda, the feeding feet. Indeed, it is not an easy matter to convey to the imagination the image of the feeding machinery of the sea-acorns. Suppose your two arms were run into one above your head, and your ten fingers were split into twenty-one sickle-like feathers; suppose, moreover, you were shut up within the closed valves of a conical shell, and had to get a meal every twelve hours by plying this feeding machinery as actively as possible during a few minutes of high tide. The feathery-feeding machinery of the sea-acorn is as graceful as the little feathers of the bird of paradise. The feeding-feathers are unsheathed quickly, and are plied swiftly, whenever a meal is to be got by activity. There is something surprising in the change from the torpor of the dead scurf to the vivacity of the feeding-feathers. The feathery sickles seem to know the brevity of harvest-time. With their longest feathers they make a little whirlpool, and with their shortest they convey their food to their mouths. At the slightest alarm, the feeding-feathers are sheathed within the conical valves, and the animal seems once more a grey dead moiety of an acorn.

I cannot confirm the observation that the optical apparatus becomes obliterated in adult balani. My colony on the cork bung always showed the greatest sensibility to light. The approach of a candle sufficed to excite their activity. No sign was ever seen that they had moulted their eyes; and, to make them draw in like lightning their feeding-sickles, I had only to interpose the shadow of my hand. Prior to receiving as a fact a metamorphose extraordinary enough to be "the only instance in nature," great care is necessary against error in the observations. Poli, who observed the balani of the Bay of Naples, says, the eggs which are laid in summer become adults in four months. Captain King says, the bottom of a boat was covered with adult balani after being thirty-three days in the tropical seas. The larves move

about actively by means of cilia. During their larve life, the sea-acorns search for abitats fulfilling the conditions needful for them, and find them on rocks, stones, piers, breakwaters, timber, ships, boats, turtle, about the eyes of the whales, or under the umbrella of the medusæ. The folds of their mantle seem to serve them as gills. We owe valuable glimpses of the structure of these creatures to the labours of Dr. Martin, Saint Ange, and Mr. Charles Darwin. Deep darkness appears, however, still to cover the mysteries of their reproduction.

The large balani are capital eating. Athenæus and Macrobius say, the Egyptian sea-acorns were esteemed good eating by the ancients. Macrobius says, white and black balani were served up at the banquet given by Lentulus when he was received among the priests of Mars. Captain King tells us, acorn-shells, or sessile balani, are found at Concepcion de Chili, and sold at Valparaiso, which are three inches broad and five and a-half long. After being boiled, they are eaten cold, and deemed a great delicacy, their flesh equalling the richness of the crab.

General exposure in the air, with occasional wettings and dippings in sea water, are the conditions of life preferred by the balani colonies. Unless the epidermes of the whales form an exception, they do not penetrate into the substances to which they attach themselves. Social and sympathetic creatures, their bases press close together in a way which frequently disturbs the symmetrical regularity of their forms. The balani are the animals, as the ulva are the plants of the zone of spray.

The brown zone commences where the green zone ends, below the high-water mark of ordinary tides. This band of coast is the bed of the sea-girdles and the sea-wands, and might be described as the pasture-fields of the limpets and the periwinkles, who browse upon them.

Limpet, the Saxon name, is derived from "impan," to plant or to graft into; or from "limpian," to adhere or belong to as a limb. The limpet is the graft or limb of the rock. Patella, the learned name, is the Latin word for a tartlet. The Greek or Latin observer was struck with the form, which resembles a pasty; the Saxon with the practical quality, the adhesiveness of the sea-side animal. The laminarian zone is the habitat of the limpets and periwinkles, because as herbivore they feed upon the plants composing it. When the sea is smooth and the tide up, they crawl about upon the sweet tangles and esculent badderlocks. The tongue of the limpet is a ribbon, two or three inches long and half a line broad, crossed by rows of hooked teeth four deep, with a pair of three-pronged saw-like teeth between every row. The action of this instrument upon the fronds of the laminaria is one of the most curious performances in the ocean theatres.

When the tangles which have been washed on shore are taken up and examined, they are generally found to have been eaten at the roots and fronds. The limpet which eats the fronds is called the patella pellucida, and the one which eats the roots is the patella lavis. Indeed, a heap of sea-wands is a treasure trove. The pellucid limpet is found on the frond, and the cerulean limpet is ensconced in a cave in the very centre of the bulbous root.

The limpet is conic-shaped, with a circular and somewhat oblong base. The distinct head has a thick and short trump; two pointed feelers carry eyes at their base, and the long tongue folds itself up backwards into the stomach. M. Milne Edwards has made a singular observation respecting the patella. He found a part of the buccal apparatus enclosed in the aort or great artery of the heart. The locomotive, a muscular disk under the body, is large and round, but overhung by the edges of the mantle. Some naturalists call the limpets the circle gills (cyclo-branches), because their gills are a circle of leaflets running round between the mantle and the locomotive. I have never seen any trace of a glue upon the locomotive of the limpet. The muscular disk adheres just as the boy's leather sucker does, by the exclusion of air. There is in the disk not merely a power of adhesion to the exclusion of air, there is a suction of the substance of the rock. I have dislodged a limpet from a sunk locality, almost the tenth of an inch deep, which was the exact shape of the disk, and must have been produced by its corroding suction. The circle of breathing leaflets is above the disk, and between it and the mantle. When a limpet is touched, the shell descends and presses against the rock. Adhering by the suction of a muscular disk, and breathing by means of gills encircling it, the limpet defies all the ordinary dashings of the breakers, and breathes securely when seemingly glued into the rocks as limbs. Feeding upon tangles and reposing upon rocks, a shell was necessary for the limpet, from which the breakers would glide off dispersedly. The shell accordingly resembles an ancient buckler, formed to turn aside the points of spears. The conical forms, indeed, of the balani and the limpets are adapted to confront the breakers. The sea acorns, as they cannot change place, establish themselves where only the edges of the farthest reaching waves can break upon them. When the swell of the sea warns them of the approach of a hurricane, the limpets flee to the rocks. Observers in the Orkneys have seen limpets which had climbed seventy feet up the face of the rocks to escape the Niagara floods which the stormy Atlantic discharges against the shores. However well they may be formed to resist the shocks of the ocean, they wisely deem it prudent to get out of the way of waves which toss

about in their play boulders weighing several tons.

There are several kinds of limpets. The Cape of Good Hope appears to be their favourite habitat. Great quantities are found there of shells of large and beautiful limpets. The common limpet is eaten everywhere. The Scotch must have deemed it a dainty in former days, if we are to judge from the promise of the lover to the lady in the old song:

> I'll pu' the limpets frae the rocks,
> To fatten and to fend thee.

However, the Scottish lassies of my time would not have been tempted by such fare.

DICK DALLINGTON.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

"No, sir; no train until this evening—six twenty—slow train, sir;—eight forty-five—mail train, sir. Will you please to dine, sir. Round of beef—not much cut from the market-dinner—or like pork, sir; missis killed a pig yesterday—pig's-fry, chitterlings, pettitoes, black-puddings." And, as he spoke, the half-waiter, half-potman of the third-class inn of a second-class railway-station twirled his daily napkin with the air of perfect indifference peculiar to the servants of railway-inns, whose customers never stop more than one day, and seldom return.

"No train until eight o'clock—the devil!" I exclaimed, in a rage, at my own stupidity in starting, without reading, the road-side time-tables. No man can make out Bradshaw.

"The devil!" replied the master, "certainly; what would you prefer, sir?—leg of a turkey, or try a pork-chop devilled; our commercial gents are very fond of our devilled pork-chops."

"Go to the deuce!" I exclaimed, "and leave me alone," and so saying I banged the door after him as he slouched out of the room.

It really was too aggravating to be detained three hours at a miserable country town on a damp December day, because the directors of the Hashington railway could not agree with the directors of the Fizzington! Therefore it was arranged that their respective trains, which appeared on the map to run continuously, should always set out two minutes before the passengers from either could cross to the bridge, which divided the camps of these iron Guelphs and Ghibellines.

In an ill-omened hour I had consented to assist at my niece Betty's wedding, had broken through my rule of not travelling more than a hundred miles between the thirtieth of October and the first of May, and found myself—who can sleep in a railway-carriage without catching cold?—detained four hours, with eighty miles to travel after eight o'clock by rail, besides one hour in an open dog-cart or two in a damp fly.

The rain poured steadily, slowly down in a stream, continuous and depressing as the oratory of a north country M.P. An exploring walk was out of the question. Half sulky, half despairing, I thrust my hands into my pockets, flattened my nose against the window-pane, and endeavoured to exhaust my mind in speculating on the possible breeds of pigs of all sizes and colours that were luxuriously rooting up a manure-heap, in the stable-yard fronting the parlour where I was a prisoner.

It was market-day; but too late to join the farmers' ordinary—not a bad place to dine at when wheat is seventy shillings a quarter. The bar and the long-room (which, on other days, was the coffee-room,) reeked with damp commercial gentlemen, corn-dealers, and butchers. The farmers were moving home in the second stage of gin-and-water, tobacco, and discussion; so I had been driven to the genteel solitude of a parlour to myself. When tired of my investigations in pigology, confused between the rival claims of a Fisher Hobbes, an Earl Radnor and a Prince Albert, a pure Chinese and a gaunt Irish sow with an endless brood, I betook myself to the Englishman's—that is to say, the bachelor Englishman's—never-failing winter resource, and poked the fire with a vigour I had not ventured to exert in my own house for the preceding ten years.

I had demolished a train of camels, and was watching the rise of the heights of Alma, when a rattle of wheels and pole-chains, which clashed with a workmanlike clang, an authoritative shout of "ostler!" followed by a tremendous ringing of bells, called me again to the window. A high-wheeled, mud-stained phaeton, drawn by a pair of smoking, foaming, blood-horses, contained a damp pair of nondescripts, buried under a Mont Blanc of macintosh capes and horse-rugs. A clumsy smock-frock groom walked to the horses' heads, and the twin mountains slowly descended with the pretended help of the bare-headed landlord, umbrella in hand. Rap-rap-tap at my parlour-door, and the landlord entered in a flurry, followed by the landlady, sharp and vinegary, as is usually the case with the wives of husbands of a mild-ale character.

"Beg pardon—not another private room with a good fire—Lord Bullfinch's agent and his lady—quite the gentleman—not expected—very much obliged." Such were the disjointed sentences of the joint-stock message.

I am rather a shy man naturally; but, on this day I was only too much pleased to have civilised society on any terms, to object to resigning a private room that I knew would be charged in the bill four shillings and sixpence with fire. I retreated to a bed-room to get rid of the morning beard and arrange more decently a costume which early winter hours had made me careless of. On my

return, the phaeton strangers were in possession of my room, fresh as snakes in a new skin, thanks to their provident wrappers and macintoshes: the lady settling her bandeaus at the zigzaggy green glass over the chimney-piece; the man, a tall, stout, broad-backed, shooting-jacketed squire, or farmer, bending inquisitively over my writing-case, apparently studying the name engraved round the lock; for he was saying:

"It's the same name, by Jove! But it can't be old Charley; it's too ridiculous."

He drew himself up as I entered, with some formal apology on his lips, stared, paused, and then we cried out together:

"Charley Kent!"

"Dick Dallington!"

"I should never have known you."

It was not likely we should. We might have passed each other a hundred times, and never have recognised old chums and schoolfellows in the two men whom fifteen years had separated.

The slender-waisted, fair-complexioned, ringletted, moustached, carefully got up Dick Dallington of other days, had filled out to a well-proportioned squire of good fourteen stone without a useless pound of fat; a forehead slightly bald about the temples, and hair still curly but closely cropped had succeeded what Mademoiselle Entrechat, whose classical notions were rather confused, used to call "Mon Richard's tête d'Apoliyon." The moustache had disappeared, and the whiskers were reduced to the true English mutton-chop shape. The laughing grey eyes, still unclouded by crowsfeet, and the smiling mouth of brilliant teeth, were witnesses in favour of the identity of the ancient Dick.

As for myself, a round rosy face and a plump ball of an active upright figure, had turned pale, thin, round-shouldered. Iron-grey hair and many minute wrinkles lining the forehead, bore witness to the identity of the Managing Director of the Dragon Life and Fire Assurance Company—a respectable man who kept his Brougham and seldom took a holiday.

My last reports of Dick had been anything but satisfactory; but now, without asking any questions, I had only to take one glance at him and another at Mrs. Dallington, to learn that he was thriving; although I could scarcely believe it possible that Dick could have been converted into the great Lord Bullfinch's agent—as the landlord had told me he had been—by any modern process of transmutation less than the discovery of the elixir vitæ or the philosopher's stone.

A stealthy survey of Mrs. Dick during the process of introduction half explained the secret. She was one of those little compact bodies, with clearly defined features, grave piercing eyes, broad foreheads and firm chins (relieved in this instance by a good-tempered mouth) who seem born to manage husbands.

Her first movement was a key to her character. After a burst of explanations and enquiries, while Dick was deep in ordering a dinner of something better than pig's fry (with the help of a hamper out of the boot of the phaeton), she drew out a memorandum book, ladylike in binding but business-like in size, and turning slowly over the leaves,—

"Is there anything you could do before dinner, Mr. Dallington (Mr. in compliment to me), we have nearly an hour here to wait?" She looked at her watch: none of your French affairs, but a solid timekeeper—a regular pocket chronometer.

"Ah! there are those allowances to be settled with Tomkins for the draining he is to do instead of a money reduction of his rent. You must make him understand that he can't have the work unless he employs old Joseph Hunsden as his foreman, for he's the only man we can depend on to take the levels properly. And there's the agreement with Gorseman for the Clayhill farm he wants for his son Robert. Mind you tell Gorseman that the rent will be raised ten per cent. if Mr. Robert does not keep the farm up to its present condition. We have had it in hand two years, and it has cost his lordship a small fortune to get it in heart after the neglect of that lazy, obstinate fellow, Gubbins. I think they will both be here, as they go home by the train now since the branch line opened. Shall I ring the bell, my dear: see if they are in the market room?" So saying, without waiting for Dick's answer, she rang very decidedly.

Something indefinable in Dallington's expression seemed to say, that he would much sooner have deferred all business in favour of a chat with his old friend; for, turning to me with a very pleasant smile, Mrs. Dallington continued:

"You will excuse Richard, I am sure, Mr. Kent, for you are a man of business, and can understand how necessary it is on a large estate like ours, where the tenants are so much dispersed, to settle every question that arises, at the moment, if possible. But now that we have had the pleasure of meeting you so unexpectedly, you must name an early day for paying us a visit at Blacthorne Grange. Bring Mrs. Kent and the children—we have plenty of spare beds; and it is such a solitary place, it will be quite a charity to help us to fill the house. It was the Dowager house formerly; but my lord has added a complete set of farm buildings to it for his model farm. By the by, I don't know whether you take notice of such things, some husbands do—can you tell me how they are wearing the bonnets in London? We never get up to town now since my poor father died."

Fortunately for my credit, Tomkins first, and then Gorseman, arrived, and turned the natural current of the lady's thoughts.

Dallington did all the negociation himself, and went through each affair in a manner quite amazing to me, who at first forgot what

fifteen years will do; in fact, he appeared to understand his business perfectly—was firm, but cordial, and evidently popular with the tenants. And although Mrs. D. made the notes which were to serve for the agreements, and to refresh her husband's memory when he came to fill up his diary; and although he sometimes referred to her for a figure or a fact, such as, "What did we allow Mr. Coppice for bones?" it was plain that the lady was not anxious to show the doeskins which she had undoubtedly appropriated from Dallington's wardrobe.

It seemed that this was a visit of inspection and preparation for a rent day; and, thanks to Mrs. D.'s bustling system, everything was settled before dinner, so we had a delightful evening. The time previous to the starting of the mail-train slipped away like minutes; and, when the warning bell brought us to the door to start, the rain had cleared away, a sharp frost had set in, and a bright moon promised my friends a not unpleasant drive home.

We parted on the platform of the railway with a promise that I would bring my family at an early day to spend a week at Blacthorne Grange instead of my customary trip to Boreglen. As I rolled and rattled on toward my journey's end, digesting an excellent dinner with my cap drawn over my eyes, shamming sleep to escape conversation with a most persevering bore from Manchester (he had previously all but arrived at wager of battle with the railway guard on the subject of a small dog he was intent on smuggling without paying), a series of dissolving views passed before me, beginning with schooldays, and ending with a long blank, and then a magical reappearance of the principal figures.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

When I saw my wife, I told her of my adventure, which was soon pleasantly endorsed by a large basket of game, with a tin of cream, and a short letter from Dick reminding me of my promise; so as soon as the fine weather set in, my wife never gave me any rest until I fixed a day for the Dallingtons. The fact was she was dying of curiosity to see and know all about my school friend Dick.

We went down, for the first time, in the strawberry season; and, one day after a good deal of ingenious pumping on the part of my Annie, as we sipped our claret, and looked out over the haha, where our thoroughbred mare and foal, Mrs. D.'s white pony, and half a dozen nice Ayrshire cattle, were feeding, Dick told me his story: skipping a bit of unpleasant misery about his father's smash and death. It ran thus:

When we parted in Lincoln's Inn Square, years ago, I knew, but would not believe that I was ruined, as I had never learnt anything. I did nothing,—I paid what debts I was pressed to pay—they were not much considering the life I had been living, but enough to make a large hole in the cash I had realised. I sent my phaeton, my stable paraphernalia, guns, ambulance, my dressing-cases, and everything else I could spare, to auction, and then went yachting to the Mediterranean; where, although I was Sir John Hastings' guest, and he did not wish me to be at any expense,—I could not help getting rid of a certain share of what I now know as petty cash. The fact was, that always having had my bills paid for me, having ordered clothes, saddles and other things of the people who served my father, it took me some time to understand how many sovereigns there were in a five-pound note.

At Naples we met Lord Bloom, whose father was in the Cabinet, and Bloom himself was joint secretary to something that gave him nothing to do, and the patronage of the Royal Bilberry Forest. Bloom is a very popular man with every one except those who are so unfortunate as to put the slightest confidence in the promises which he spends his life in making. He is a remarkably elegant white-teethed, fresh-complexioned, well-dressed fellow, with a hearty, cordial, shake with both-hands-style of address that is irresistible at a first interview. Bloom's object in life is to be amused at the least possible expense. So, of course, he is always on the look-out for good companions. When we arrived, he was very hot upon two subjects,—a steeple-chase at Rome, which he had helped to get up, and had entered a horse for, and some letters on the Irrigation of Piedmont; which, in his usual style he had promised to write up for Lord Bumper, president for the year of the Royal Agricultural Society. He trusted to the chapter of accidents, and his own oily tongue, for finding a gentleman jockey for his horse Blatherumskate, an admirable horse, except that he had killed two grooms, and had lamed a jockey: and a man able to get up something on Irrigation—his own literary abilities being confined to writing and spelling vapid notes in very crooked English.

On me he pounced at once with such a host of compliments, that no man of my age and vanity could resist, to train and ride his demon horse. He sent Flashington's other friend and ex-tutor at Brazenose, Robert Harden, who had come out to recruit his health after the overwork of carrying off his fellowship, to investigate the water-meadows in Piedmont.

What he said to Harden I don't know, it was a secret, but poor H. went off in great glee, under the idea that he had secured a powerful patron. I only know that in the following, year a pamphlet appeared, addressed to Lord Bumper, by his affectionate friend Bloom, on Italian irrigation. It was neatly written, and full of appropriate classical quo-

tations, which made the friends of my lord stare.

As to me, he investigated, in the most paternal manner, my birth, education, plans, and prospects, and ended by begging me to make myself perfectly easy, as he would undertake to obtain me a post which would render me independent. At a ball at the ambassador's, on our second interview, he took me on one side to enquire whether I should prefer the governorship of the Bolting Islands, or deputy ranger of the Royal Bilberry Forests? I hinted that I was scarcely fit for a colonial governor. But, putting both hands on my shoulders, mysteriously smiling, he assured me that a little experience on the turf was the best possible probation for a colonial "office." However, it was no matter if I preferred the rangership. Sir John being very busy with his musical studies—his last fancy—Lord Bloom and I became inseparable; we rode together, drove together, dined together; his stud, his servants, his opera box were at my service. We posted to Rome together, and back, and I became, in fact, a sort of unpaid secretary to his lordship, transacting all his affairs at an expense to myself, trifling in detail, but accumulating as trifles will accumulate, where a man has no income. His lordship never by any chance seemed to suspect that he put me to expense.

The race came off, and although in mounting Blatherum bit out a piece of my boot, and very nearly a mouthful of the calf of my leg, I won it, was overwhelmed with thanks, and made quite happy by hints of the Bilberry Deputy Rangership; a house, a garden, the run of the forest for two horses, three cows, five score sheep, and a salary of six hundred pounds a-year, beside perquisites of venison and firewood.

At length official duties—the necessity of signing his name—recalled Lord Bloom. I was not sorry; my capital was getting very low.

At Southampton, Hustings and I parted; his last words being, "Stick to Bloom. Bloom's not a bad fellow; an uncommon pleasant fellow, but he's got an uncommon short memory. So stick to him, old fellow. If I can do anything for you I will. I only wish you would take my advice, and get japanned. The rector of Bargrove is dying. They write me that he can't last out the season. The gift's with me, and I 'd present you with all the pleasure in the world; a good house just outside my park, and the best cock-shooting in the county. Three packs of hounds meet in the parish."

It was of no use. I was no more fit for the church than the church was fit for me. So I took lodgings—a sky-bedroom in St. James's; breakfasted and lunched at my old club, the Magnolia, and took a walk instead of dining when I did not dine out. Of course I left a card on Lord Bloom as soon as the Court Circular told me that he was in town. Weeks passed and no notice. At length came a note with the well-known scrawl and coat-of-arms. It requested me to breakfast with his lordship, to meet Sir Peter Passport precisely at a quarter past nine o'clock. His lordship was always special and curious in his appointments; if you were a minute late, met you with his watch in his hand. Now, as Sir Peter Passport held the seals of an important office, I felt sure that some appointment was about to be settled, and I ran over in my mind all the possible vacancies.

Punctual to a second, I reached Bloom House in time to be shown into the breakfast-room, where I waited for an hour. Then his lordship appeared, but no Sir Peter; he had been suddenly obliged to leave town. So we breakfasted; and his lordship talked of every imaginable subject in the most agreeable manner; asked my opinion on the state of parties, the last quarrel of the Bishop of Torquay, the new novel, and the favourites for the Leger, with an air of deference to my superior judgment that was meant to be most fascinating.

Breakfast came to an end; not a word about my business. At length I referred to the words in the invitation.

With his usual benevolent smile, Lord Bloom said, "Oh, ah, yes! I am sorry Sir Peter could not come. The fact is, that the Prince of Polenta, a particular friend of ours, wants a team of four horses selected, to drive in hand in his carriage, on the course. You remember the prince—a little dumpling of a man with a red moustache, enormously rich? They must be all of a colour, blacks with grey or brown muzzles, not under sixteen hands high, and must step well together. So I told Sir Peter you were the very man to select them—a first-rate judge of a horse. Now, will you go down to Yorkshire first, and see what you can do? You know Sir Peter has immense influence, and it may be an excellent introduction for you."

Like a fool, I went; and, at the end of three months, after a most disgusting amount of showing and bartering, examining and returning, the team was collected. Next I had to go down to Liverpool, and see it packed off for Naples. In return I got a note of thanks from Sir Peter, couched in terms that might have been addressed to a dealer, and a cheque for my expenses out of pocket. The thanks were to Lord Bloom. From that time to the end of the season Lord Bloom never allowed me to be idle a day. Again I was installed as honorary secretary. I breakfasted with him, dined with him, and rode with him; his toast-maker, his pine-merchant, his lawyer, his architect, all found in me the super me illabor; beside a host of poor devils to whom he promised something, as they said, for election and other services, whom it was my duty to put off. Everything

disagreeable fell to my lot in the way of excuse or complaint; but then I had a flood of compliments on my tact and ability. When the Tuggenton Railway Company desired to buy his lordship's land and vote on very liberal terms, I was sent to negotiate and show how Sandy Warren they were obliged to tunnel through was worth a thousand pounds an acre.

When, previous to his nephew's standing a contested election at Bloomborough, his lordship wished his own portrait and memoir to appear, I was deputed to arrange the materials with the editor of the Bloomborough Gazette. And whenever I seemed to hang back from the constant demands on my time and temper, an ingenious reference to the bad health of the deputy-ranger of Bilberry, and the improvements possible in the lodge, smoothed over my scruples and my fears.

It was the end of the season; my funds were reduced to a hundred pounds. The Morning Muddler told me of the death of the deputy-ranger, aged seventy-eight, universally respected. I wrote immediately to Lord Bloom, and received in reply a scrawl unsigned, undated, desiring me not to make myself uneasy.

A week passed. I met my old friend, Sir John Hustings at a land sale at the Corner, who exclaimed, on seeing me, "Did not Bloom promise you the deputy-rangership?"

"Yes, certainly. You saw the letter?"

"Well, then, you're done, my boy. Look here. In this letter, dated yesterday, you see Lord Bloom says: 'that finding Mr. Dallington's tastes and manners quite unsuited for so responsible an appointment, he has no hesitation in bestowing it upon young Limax.'"

"And pray," said I, very calmly, while I trembled with suppressed rage, "who is Mr. Limax?"

"O, the son of the lawyer to the Riggleton Railway; the deputy-rangership is a return for the price Bloom got for his railway. Young Limax, who was in the 190th Hussars, and could not make it do, has just sent this note to Schneiders to keep him quiet, and Schneiders showed it me to know if it was right, so I just brought it away. I had, in reality, long suspected, although I did not like to own it to myself, that Lord B.'s polite speeches and warm promises were merely his way of getting his work done cheaply.

I was furious, and in despair, and, meeting Lord Bloom, was foolish enough to tell him my mind. Whereupon he smiled compassionately, and protested he was still, as always, my friend. We parted. What I did, or how I lived for the next two years, it would be difficult for me to tell. I was reduced to the lowest ebb. I even fiddled in a dancing orchestra, disguised in hair and moustaches. When I met my father's old coachman, Andrew Fistler, who had set up in business as a job-master, he asked me to his house, and, when I had no home, I became one of his "turn men," and drove night-flys for three months. I drove you one night from the railway station; but you could not know me through whiskers and mufflers. Through poor old Fistler's management, I went to Russia with a string of thoroughbred horses under my charge, and with two grooms. Thence, I travelled through Hungary and Bohemia, and stayed there a year with Baron Von Horn, as huntsman to a pack of foxhounds he had exported. I knew little enough about hunting except riding straight; but, as he knew less, with the help of an English feeder who brought over the hounds, I did pretty well. A scrap of the Times, which came with the Cheshire cheese—for my baron was an Anglomaniac to the extent of cheese and beer, as well as foxhounds and blood-horses—contained an advertisement, requesting Richard Dallington, Esquire, youngest son of the late Peter Dallington, to call on Messrs. Leasem, solicitors, Lincoln's Inn Square. I set off with all speed to England, where the mortgaged farm left by my father was required by a company who had opened a coal-mine in the adjoining estate. This placed me in possession of a few hundred pounds in ready cash and an income more than equal to that of a half-pay captain. With this news came an invitation from an aunt whom I had never seen, the widow of my uncle who had died in India, to pay her a visit at Pumpington—the white-stuccoed watering-place, where, according to Indian custom, she had taken up her residence for the sake of the whist and the waters. The invitation was accompanied by a bank note in three figures, for the good old soul remembered me as six months old, and had, for a wonder, heard a favourable account of me from her maid, a niece of my patron Fistler.

Of course I ought to have been very prudent; but, somehow, as long as I was single, prudence and I never travelled long together on the same road. Give me my little comforts, a snug lodging, a well-cut wardrobe, a good horse or two, and a little hunting and shooting. I could be economical on most other points, and dine contentedly off a chop with a glass of ale. But, when I had money, I could not help indulging myself in my peculiar weaknesses. Now Pumpington is a place where fashion combines with fox-hunting, and where a steeple-chase gentlemen cup is got up to please the ladies and profit the innkeepers.

So I cheated myself into thinking that this visit should be my very last freak. I would settle down. I would take a farm in Wales or in Ireland, or I would retire to Germany or live on my income in some good sporting district. But, it would be doing most honour

to my aunt to take down a couple of good horses, and help her to get into better society; when I left I should sell them at a profit. Accordingly I went to the Corner one rainy day when the town was empty, and bought a couple of real flyers for an old song, but for a sum that made a great gap in the sum I had laid aside for my visit to Pumpington.

There I meant to finish; but, because it rained I stayed the sale out, not without misgivings of the result. The last lot was a cob, handsome enough for the park, and strong enough to carry Baron Bullion, but with a sore back. I hate cobs. I think them useless; only endurable when bestridden for constitutional reasons by a banker or chancellor of the exchequer. But an auction has always had on me the same exciting effect that green cloth sevens-the-main, has on some of my friends. I am fascinated like a squirrel by a rattlesnake. My wife never lets me go near a sale since I purchased, without seeing them, three dozen gridirons in one lot.

Well, there were no bidders for the cob. The dealers were full; the cob-riders, if any, had no taste for a sore back. I have a famous recipe that never fails. When I heard the animal that would have fetched ninety guineas in the spring hanging at fifteen pounds, I could not resist, but went in and soon found Hippopotamus knocked down to me at nineteen pounds nineteen shillings. Here was a pretty piece of business! Probably my aunt had no stables attached to Bhurtpore Villa, for two hunters and a cob with a sore back.

I amused myself with believing that perhaps my aunt rode—no, that was too absurd; well, perhaps she drove. Hippopotamus should be reduced to a four-wheeler.

In the meantime, by great good luck, I picked up in the yard one of the grooms I remembered at Hustings's, a smart, acute fellow. Besides being a good groom and coachman, he was something of a surgeon for horses and men; he was a good cook, could wait at table, valeted pretty well, and had a powerful talent for collecting and retailing news.

A few days sufficed to get the horses in order for their journey. I sent them by the road; and, as they must eat somewhere, I thought they would be getting into working order on the way.

I went off by the train. At the first station I was joined by a gentleman of middle age, sallow countenance, blue velvet-collared coat, princely person, and nervous manner, accompanied by his daughter — all-poke bonnet and blue veil. They had a tremendous quantity of luggage, a sponge bath, two saddles—the gentleman's new—and a remarkably stupid servant.

I don't think I made a favourable impression at that time upon people of that sort. I mean respectable sort of people, with offices in the City, and money in the funds, and all that sort of thing. I am sure I dressed quietly enough—a sober travelling suit of one colour, no rings or chains, no long curls or moustache. Still, somehow or other, I always found the fathers of families rather shy of me when they had their daughters with them.

So it was with my travelling companion in the Pumpington train; but, by a happy accident, Mr. Thinner—you smile, Charles; I see you guess the best half of the story—would see, himself, at the first station, whether his luggage was right. Thank Heaven, it was all wrong! Sleepyhead, his footman, had left the bath, the saddles, the foot-warmer, one trunk, one dressing-case, and one hat-box, behind. Trains do not wait for raving passengers; but, while he was raving, I found time to telegraph back to the station-master. By the time we got to the branch line I had an answer: "Luggage all right—will be sent on by the next train." This lucky hit on my part thawed my old gentleman a bit, and he condescended to talk enough to let me know that he was a solicitor, one of the great firm of Thinner, Fellem, and Phlehm; and having destroyed his digestion and his nerves by over-work, and perhaps, though he did not say so, too much port wine, he was now on his way to Pumpington to drink the water, take a course of cold baths and horse exercise—he winced rather at horse exercise—with "my daughter, also rather an invalid," under the advice of that eminent and fashionable M.D., Sir Joseline Bunks.

You may laugh as you please, but I fell in love with the daughter at first sight, when I saw her so quietly and gently manage the angry head of the firm of Thinner, and so very calmly and decidedly give Sleepyhead his discharge. Some men like a wife they can manage—I found one who would manage me; so I fell in love over ears in three hours travelling with my Patty; for of course you have guessed that Mrs. D. is my railway angel.

Well, although the respectable papa got on famously about horseflesh, and although he confided to me his fears lest, after ten years without practice (since the time he was in the habit of riding from Hornsey to Lincoln's Inn), and although he gave me a full account of several interesting law cases in which he had been engaged, with bar anecdotes over which I did not yawn, he parted from me at the end of our journey with many formal polite speeches, and a half apology that the state of his health would prevent his receiving any company, not even that of my aunt Mallet, whom I pressed into my service, and tendered my card with Bhurtpore Lodge pencilled upon it.

My aunt received me very warmly; the good soul expressed her astonishment at my

being so much grown, which was not astonishing, considering that she had not seen me since I was in long clothes. She had a whist party of Indian generals and colonels, their wives and widows, the same evening.

In the course of the week the horses arrived. Before the end of the following week, I entirely won my aunt's heart by confiding to her in a moment of weakness my adventure in the train, and my love at first sight. She entered warmly into my interests, and to make a long story short, Patty and I met at balls, parties, and pic-nics. I flourished my scarlet and the blue silk triumphantly before her, and won a steeple-chase. The last was a very foolish move, which sent me back in Mr. Thinner's graces at least sixty per cent.; but what will not vanity do? My aunt made Mr. Thinner's acquaintance, and Miss Thinner's too, and gave me hopes when I was in despair. "Go on, my dear Richard," she would say, "I am sure she likes you. You have an excellent chance, because you are such a random goose, and she is so very sensible. Now I have always observed that sensible women prefer a man who is rather a goose."

Still the lawyer was obstinate, Patty was his right hand—read all his letters—made minutes of their contents—wrote answers to his dictation—kept his cash accounts, and made his gruel. Then he was continually telling my aunt that if his daughter married at all she would choose a man of business—a person of sense, with a profession, who could, &c. I always stopped my ears when my aunt began to ask why I was not a lawyer, or a clergyman, like that heavenly man the Rev. Michah Mouchoir?

When everything else failed, I called my valet, Giorno Robinson, into my councils while packing away my hunting things, and taking instructions for the next day.

"Saw Miss Thinner to-day, sir, riding with her guvner, sir, up the Green Lanes, while you was a-hunting, sir. Uncommon nice young lady. Mr. Thinner a very poor hand on a horse, sir."

"Indeed," said I, "what makes you think so, Robinson?"

"Why, sir, you see I was exercising Dandy Jim in his clothes, and I just hustled him along past the old gent, and the piebald pony (it belongs to Snaffles, the riding-master, and I really believe it's a hundred years old) gave a bit of a start, and blessed if his arms was not round its neck in no time."

Then after a pause he continued:

"If I might make so bold, seeing you're off your feed as they say, and always riding out one way—why if you was to swap Hippopotamus with Mr. Thinner, you might both, you see, sir, be suited."

"What do you mean?" I exclaimed, half angry, half amused.

A few days afterwards my hunting friends were surprised to see me riding about on Hippopotamus, packed tight and city banked on a soft stuffed Somerset saddle, with a pad before my leg and behind my thigh, with my arm in a sling. In this guise I followed the respectable Thinner at a long distance up the green lanes, where he rode tremblingly, under the fierce orders of his tyrant and physician, who had said, "Mr. Thinner, if you don't ride five miles a-day, you won't live five years. If you don't choose to follow my prescription, don't come to me." So he rode daily, in fear of his life.

As soon as the regular two-mile canter performed on this particular evening on the riding-master's piebald, had commenced, Robinson appeared at the end of the lane on Dandy Jim, passed me at a gallop, and soon overtaking the invalid lawyer, stopped short, shouting some indistinct word, as if addressed to Dandy Jim; on which the obedient piebald halted, and sat down on his hind legs like a dog, while poor Mr. Thinner rolled on the turf.

To canter up, to address Robinson in the most violent language, and discharge him on the spot—to pick up Mr. Thinner as if he had been my father — was the work of a moment. And this was no sooner done than the piebald gathered himself together, and set off toward town at a mild trot.

Mr. Thinner had sustained no damage except a crack in his black trousers, which rendered walking three miles neither convenient nor dignified. With many assurances and asseverations, I persuaded him to mount Hippopotamus, while I walked by his side for the first mile. In that space, when he felt the difference between his smooth, slippery saddle, and the closely-packed cushion for which, without his knowledge, he had been carefully measured, and between the elastic well-trained pace of the king of cobs and the screw-canter of the riding-master's hacks, or of the ill-broken brute he had bought for himself from a client, his countenance relaxed. He insisted on my mounting Dandy Jim, while Robinson trudged behind, apparently weeping, with the horse-cloths. That day Mr. Thinner asked me to dinner.

On the following day he rode Hippopotamus; on the day after, he offered me a hundred guineas for him, and I refused to sell him at any price, although willing to lend him.

The next week a letter was sent to Messrs. Fleece, marked outside, "Private, A. T." And my aunt's maid learned from Miss Thinner's maid, "As Mr. Thinner said as how he was glad to find there was nothing again Mr. Dallington's character."

In three months the wedding of the son of the late Richard Dallington, Esq., of Bhurtpore Villa, to Lucy, only daughter of Abraham Thinner, of the eminent firm, &c.,

appeared in the Daily Toast Rack. I promised to ride no more steeple-chases, and not to hunt without Patty's express permission. Within the year, my father-in-law put me into Lord Bullfinch's agency. My dear Patty has made me what you see,—never idle, and one of the happiest of men.

AN AUTUMN SHADOW.

It is golden September, fragrant and bounteous,
The red corn is harvested, early and plenteous:
Rich, heavy with fruitage, the orchard boughs bending down,
Yield to the gleaner's hand Labour's fair autumn-crown!

In the far Western sky,
Opal and ruby vie;
Amethyst, topaz sheen,
Melting to pale sea-green,
Come out and fade again into the grey
As steals o'er the uplands the work-weary day.

Songs of the harvest-home swell through the twilight air,
Young men and maidens come trooping, all brave and fair,

Rich as the season is, merry as May,
Laughing and loving and jesting and gay!
Echo the noisy bells
Through the deep mossy dells,
With a wild thankful chime
All that sweet sunset time!

For 'tis the Harvest-month, fragrant and bounteous,
That giveth its golden store, early and plenteous,
Rich, heavy with fruitage, the orchard boughs bending down,
Yield to the gleaner's hand Labour's fair autumn crown!

Faithful Margaret watches the reapers,
Winding along by the bend of the lane,
One face is absent there, one figure wanting,
One voice she hears not swelling the strain.
She by her window under the gable,
Stands with the curtain held back in her hand.
The few who remember look up and are silent,
—The bravest and fairest are lost to their band.

He has his grave, midst the graves of brave soldiers
Green on the slope of the hill where he fell;
Unmarked midst the thickly-sown seed of the battle,
But in one faithful heart sculptured full well.

She is alone,—unwed and yet widowed,
Sacred her youth to the love of her youth,
Wearing away in a pale mournful silence
Vowed to her hero-love, love of her youth!

September shall come again, many Septembers,
Sunshiny Junes, and chill icy Decembers;
Snows on her hair, and deep lines on her brow,
Ere she shall think of him other than now!

Gold are the autumn skies,
Yet to her tear-glazed eyes,
Wear they a tint of mournfullest grey;
Gold is the autumn-wood
Berried as red as blood,
Yet clouded all o'er like a thunderous day.

New is her sorrow yet,
Bitter her tears are yet,
Leave her alone with her weeping awhile;
Peace will come home to her,—
Purified home to her,
Let her heart bide with its trouble awhile.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

The progress of population in a civilised state creates, and at the same time extinguishes, inventions and manufactures. Thus, in the fens of Lincolnshire, fishers and fowlers, boats, leaping-poles, stilts, nets, eel-spears, and all the paraphernalia of decoys, have disappeared before drains, wind-pumps, steam-pumps, ploughs, harrows, drills, and corn-crops, which have taken the place of swamps, lakes, wild-fowl and fish. The wooden spoons and bowls, once the chief furnishing of a farmer's kitchen, are superseded by pewter and tin and Britannia metal, from Birmingham or Wolverhampton. The art of the falconer and the skill of the long-bow maker have vanished before gunpowder and the double barrel. Almost all the ancient emblems of agriculture are in course of being superseded. We have, before us, a popular print of the series of operations that precede the mill and the baker's loaf; and we had the other day, in Essex, at a meeting called to award the reaping-machine prizes of the Royal Agricultural Society, an opportunity of seeing the most modern system of ploughing, sowing, mowing, threshing, and grinding. The contrast between the artistic and ancient, and the real and modern systems, was not a little curious.

In the picture, the sower, a stout swain, with a sheet fastened over his shoulder and shaped into a huge pocket before him, dexterously flings the seed broadcast in a semi-circle around him; the reaper, with his hook, bends to his task; the thresher flourishes his flail—the flail itself being an improvement that has not yet superseded the hoof of the ox and the horse, in eastern Europe. The plough is a short wooden instrument, with stilts fixed at an acute angle, held down by main force, and drawn by a string of horses, under the care of a long whip in the hands of a short plough-boy. All these arts and instruments are doomed; have, indeed, already disappeared, or have been—in the best farms and counties—so far improved as to be scarcely recognisable. They have disappeared, not under the influence of inventive talent; not because, as in manufacturers' improved machinery, it produces a better article, for it is not so (the grain sown without care by the Spanish, Wallachian, or Russian peasant, grows up plumper and finer than the best farmer's best crop in Essex—the first of England's corn-growing counties); but because the progress of demand for produce, and the decrease of the supply of rural labour, compels the farmer to adopt the mechanical means which economise labour and ensure

the most rapid and effectual execution of the work; rendering him more independent of those bands of harvest supernumeraries, on whom, while labour was superabundant, he was accustomed to depend.

To begin with the modern iron plough, with its long lever handles, long, flowing, concave share and pair of wheels,—although heavier in dead weight than the old plough, it slips through the earth with less than half horse-power applied, and, when once properly set, can be guided by a boy; in fact, it almost travels alone. Just as the swiftness of a ship depends, so do the efficiency and facility of draught of a good plough depend, on its form. The pair-horse abreast was the wise fashion in Flanders, in Normandy, and in Scotland, half a century before it became common in England. There are counties where, as in Sussex, a long file of horses still drag their slow length along. The wheels which are so great an improvement to the plough, are an invention not unknown to the Romans, and were used in England centuries ago; yet, while in the high-farmed English estates nothing else is to be found, in Scotland they make their way but by degrees. The shape of the ploughshare (on which the draught and work depend) was a matter of fancy and rule in every parish, until mechanical science was applied by the Ransomes of Ipswich and Howard of Bedford to discover the sort of plough which should cut and move the soil with the least labour. The success of the application of science and practice to iron ploughs was shown triumphantly in Paris, in eighteen hundred and fifty-five. One of the heaviest English-wheeled ploughs was drawn easily by the smallest French horse in the field, cutting a straight even furrow; while the same horse, applied to one of the lightest foreign ploughs, stopped short after a very short, zig-zaggy course. But, the best ploughshare had not driven the old one out of the market in eighteen hundred and fifty-six; and now, behold, the Steam Cultivator looming in the horizon of invention like a faint streak on the sea that tells us of a coming steamer! The prize ploughs only economise two or three horses per plough; the Steam Cultivator, whenever it becomes a reality, whenever it advances from the position of an expensive curiosity to an economical agricultural machine, will more than half empty the farmer's stable, relieving him of a dozen or so of fat, sleek, but indispensable devourers of profits. Not that there are many farmers who will be able to endure the expense of a Steam Cultivator for their own special use; but we shall have the itinerant principle extended. At present, we meet formidable processions of gay-coloured machinery on rural highways and byways—of threshing machines and their steam-engines, drills, and harrows, to be hired by the day, the quarter of corn, or the acre. On the same errand we shall soon see reaping-machines travelling about, following the sun, from the warmest and dryest to the coldest and wettest harvest, under charge of an ingenious blacksmith and boy—superseding the ragged sickle-bearing armies of Irish, who are now better employed at home on unencumbered estates, or in America, taking the rough edge off backwoods and prairies.

Seed-drills are a very ancient invention; but the last ten years of guano, superphosphate, and other costly portable manures, have made them so common, that it is difficult now to find a broadcast sower; and, in another ten years, manual broad-casting will be one of the extinct agricultural performances: already for economising manures and killing off the fly on turnips by a sprinkling of salt or guano, we have a demand for broad-casting machines. Thus, then, the artist intending to symbolise agriculture, must alter his plough, and find some substitutes for his sower, and his thresher, and his reaper.

The story of the reaping-machine, usefully illustrates the peculiar difficulties that attend the application of mechanical improvements to agricultural machinery.

According to a Roman writer on Agriculture, the Gauls reaped by a machine which, pushed before an ox, cut off the heads of corn, and dropped them into a box. Between the latter end of the last century, and the first twenty-five years of this (a period singularly rife with mechanical inventions), some dozens of patents were taken out for reaping by machinery; but not one was practically useful. In eighteen hundred and twenty-seven, the Reverend Patrick Bell, son of a farmer, and at that time a student for the Scotch ministry, determined to invent a reaping-machine. He had thought of the subject for years, and had, when a boy, seen a print of such a machine constructed by Smith of Deanston; which, by the way, was ingenious, but useless.

One evening, after tea, while walking in his father's garden, his eye was attracted by a pair of gardener's shears sticking in the hedge; he took hold of them, and began to cut the twigs of the blackthorn—perhaps idly, for want of thought; but, while so engaged, it struck him that this was the principle that might be applied to cutting corn. At the present day, when Bell's machine stands at the top of the prize list, it is curious to find that the very motion that suggested his whole invention has been totally abandoned. After much consideration, he contructed a model, and then prepared a machine on a large scale. In order to keep his secret, he made patterns in wood of every part that required to be made of metal; these he sent, piece by piece, separately, as he required them, to the blacksmith, with instructions to make a thing of iron, or of steel, as like that sent as possible. When he received them back, he filed, ground, or otherwise

finished them with his own hands, and, at length, was able to put the whole together. His first experiment was made in a long, narrow, empty outhouse. Into this outhouse, when every one was away on the farm, he conveyed with a wheelbarrow as much earth as covered the floor to the depth of six inches, and pressed it down with his feet, then drew a sheaf of oats from the barn-yard, and planted its stubbly stalk in the mould. He then shut and barred the door; and, putting himself in the horse's place, pushed the machine through the artificial crop. On arriving at the end of the shed, the young student found the crop all cut, but lying higgledy-piggledy. A distributor was required.

The signs of the artificial harvest were cleared away; and, after many trials, he invented a canvass sheet, stretched on rollers, something on the same principle as the tapes which deliver the sheets on a steam printing machine, which delivered the cut corn in a regular swathe. He next devised the well-known reel for collecting the corn against the cutter. The whole machine was ready for work in the summer of eighteen hundred and twenty-eight, and the harvest-time was impatiently expected. Before the corn was perfectly ripe, about eleven o'clock at night, when every woman and child was safe in bed, the machine was drawn from its place of concealment, harnessed to the good horse Jock, and the young student with his brother, a future farmer, made their way to a field of wheat, talking in whispers. The first experiment was successful. After a few more private trials, the machine was exhibited before a party of farmers, on the farm of Pourie, near Dundee. A copy of the original invention was made at a foundry at Dundee, exhibited before the Highland Society in the same year at Glasgow, and received a prize of fifty pounds; although, from imperfect fitting, it would not work, and some eighteen machines, made by different hands, without the inventor's supervision, equally failed.

The late Lord Panmure volunteered to advance the cost of a patent, but Mr. Bell declined the kind offer: not being desirous, as he stated, of retaining any exclusive rights over an agricultural improvement. The probability is, that if he had patented his reaping-machine, it would have been brought to perfection, and into notice many years earlier; for inventions open to every one are, like common ground unfenced, not always considered worth cultivating. But the time had not come for such an agricultural machine; unskilled labour was too cheap; and, if such a machine had been ordered, there was no class of implement-makers able to supply it. It is only on a large scale that such implements can be profitably manufactured.

From that time, the invention slept and was forgotten, although one machine was preserved, and was occasionally worked at Inchmichael by Mr. Bell, the farmer, and a complete description of it, with drawings, was inserted in Loudon's Magazine of Agriculture, in eighteen hundred and thirty, and afterwards in his Encyclopædia. But, for twenty subsequent years, the question was, not how to supersede, but how to employ the labour which the late war, the English poor-laws, and Irish rack-rented potato-gardens had created. The labour-saving reaping-machine was not wanted, and remained unknown to all but the curious, until eighteen hundred and fifty-one brought round general prosperity, and the Exhibition in Hyde Park. Of course, among the competing nations were the United States men, with an immense space, very imperfectly filled with discordant violin-pianos, Excelsior bedsteads, artificial legs, false teeth, chewing tobacco for the Duke of Wellington, india-rubber in all manner of forms, photographs, rocking-chairs, and M'Cormick's reaping-machine. That reaping-machine was one of the greatest successes of the whole exhibition. The sensation it created among the poverty-stricken collection from one of the wealthiest and most ingenious countries in the world, was immense; very soon it was flanked by another implement on a different plan by another American, Gideon Hussey; and our farmers learned to their astonishment, that these same machines had been in use in America for fifteen years, and were sold by thousands. The newspaper sensation woke up our Scotch friends, and the original Bell was disinterred. Trials followed, in which the Scotch minister's invention was not worsted.

In eighteen hundred and fifty-three, Mr. Crosskill, who had purchased from Mr. Bell, the farmer, his machine, and the right to use his name, won the gold medal of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society, and presented it to the inventor, Patrick Bell — his first reward after fifteen years.

Mr. Bell fancies, very naturally, that pirated or oral accounts of his reaper originated the American invention. This may or may not be; but it is unlikely that M'Cormick did copy Bell, as his machine is so different as to have the merit of originality. His cutting action was a tooth-edged knife, instead of shears, and it has since been adopted by Crosskill. Hussey's also differs from M'Cormick's. The probability is, that in the United States, as elsewhere, necessity was the mother of invention; that the farmers, having no travelling Irishmen to depend on, were driven to their wit's end, to cut a crop that grew and ripened with no aid from skill, and very little care, on a virgin soil under a burning sun. If Hussey or M'Cormick heard that a reaping-machine had been invented in Scotland, that information would be enough to set them to work.

In June, eighteen hundred and thirty-four, we find letters patent granted to Angus H. M'Cormick for improvements in the reaping-machines; Abraham Randall and Obed Hussey having each taken out patents for the same object in eighteen hundred and thirty-three. From that time reaping-machines became a regular subject of improvement and manufacture in the United States; until, in eighteen hundred and fifty, the sales had amounted to upwards of twelve hundred of one patent only; and the renewal of M'Cormick's patent became the subject of a serious opposition and remonstrance, on the ground that it was not an original invention. Yet, so ignorant were Englishmen still of the progress of machine-reaping, that, in South Australia—where, also, the want of harvest labour was felt in a manner unknown in the mother country—a third kind of machine was invented, which clipped off the ears, and threshed them out at the same time by the moving power of a horse pushing behind, as in Bell's machine; leaving the straw (valueless there) to be burned off.

In eighteen hundred and fifty-one our farmers were beginning—not exceptionally, but as a class—to feel the want of the rapid and certain aid of machinery in agriculture. Scotch nationality helped not a little; but there were many difficulties to be conquered. English crops are heavier, and straw is more valuable, than in the United States; and we must add that our ordinary farm-labourers are not so handy in repairing, or so willing to use, mechanical inventions, as the States-men. Landlords, as usual, came forward and purchased; the machine-reapers' agricultural societies gave prizes; English tenant-farmers hung back, not without good reason, as, for want of attention to mechanical details or workmanship, many machines were thrown aside as unworkable after one harvest.

But, the time had come when the assistance of machine aid in the harvest was required, and a large capital of money and mechanical skill was thrown into the subject. The results were shown in the Royal Agricultural trials of August, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, at Boxted Lodge, Essex, when the verdict of a large body of tenant-farmers settled that the heaviest crops could be most economically cut by the machine-reaper, and the labourers whom a series of years have accustomed to the advantages of machinery, applauded the conclusion of their employers. On this occasion the machines cut at the rate of about three acres in four hours, in wheat-fields bearing crops of about forty bushels to the acre, or more than double the average of American crops. The first prize was given to Crosskill's patent improvements of Bell's Reaper; the second was divided between Messrs. Burgess', McCormick and Dray's Hussey.

Experience, and the heavy work of English crops, have brought about a number of improvements in the details of each of these machines, which now work on day after day without any serious derangement; each doing the work of from twenty-five to thirty mowers, and employing from thirty to forty binders to follow in their track. But, the money-saving is a secondary advantage in the use of agricultural machines. The chief advantage lies in the greater certainty and regularity which it ensures in all the operations of the farm. The next important point is the necessity of raising every farm operation to the same standard of excellence.

Thus, for instance, Boxted Lodge is an estate; the property is cultivated by one of the most intelligent members of the council of the Royal Agricultural Society, and has long been under high farming,—highly manured, perfectly clear of weeds, with a large breed of live-stock, and the best useful machinery of the day. The reaping-machines had the advantage of level, thoroughly-drained fields, of regular form, none of less extent than twenty-five acres, some of fifty acres, with close straight fences, and crops clear of weeds. It would be no economy to use a reaping-machine in a series of three-acre Devonshire fields, of a cocked-hat shape, where weeds and flowers make five-and-twenty per cent. of the crop: because, between time lost in turning round and round, and waste of power in cutting weeds, the machine would cost more than hand-labour. Hence, the progress of agricultural machinery offers a premium in favour of clean cultivation, large square fields, and the ample crops that can only be had through a liberal application of drilled manures.

With a machine-reaper the farmer can begin to cut as soon as any part of his crop is ripe, because the machine does not eat or ask wages when not at work, as extra travelling shearers or mowers do: he can depend more on his own regularly employed servants, and can make long hours, with an extra pair or two of horses, if the weather threaten. Supposing a hundred or more acres reduced to stubble, and the corn stacked. According to the modern rapid system, the ground is ploughed at once, and not allowed to grow weeds for two or three months; if needful, seed for turnips or rape may be, as at Boxted, put in at once by a horse-drawn drill and machine broad-caster, which put in the seeds for each crop, with the manure, at one operation—a feat which no amount of hand-labour could have effected in the same space of time. When we come to sowing corn, the use of machinery is still more important, not only from mere saving of the time when a week's rain might peril a future harvest; but from the regularity of quantity in seed and in manure,—a little more or less per acre exactly measured, according to soil and season. Without the drill, thousands of acres in a showery season

would remain altogether unsown, because hand-labour could never get through the work in time. Again, instead of a general muster to thresh out in a hurry with the flail, the steam-engine with its steady speed does the work when wanted, without waiting for rainy days, idle hands, and an empty barn. At Boxted Lodge, by way of a practical lesson, Mr. Fisher Hobbes had the same field reaped, ploughed, and sown, in the same day; and had part of the wheat thus reaped, threshed out, ground into flour by steam-power, and made into bread for his dinner-party: thus exhibiting a specimen of the system of continuous machine-work to which the best agriculturists are coming.

What we still need, is, an economical steam-cultivator, which will work from light to dark, and even after dark, with lamps, if necessary, to take advantage of short and doubtful seasons, superseding the slow plough, as the machine-drill has superseded the broadcast sower. That invention is coming, and then the circle of machine cultivation will be nearly complete.

Yet, after all, we must not forget that agricultural results have their bounds; we cannot invent a sun, or improve our national seasons. There is a well-defined limit to the growth of corn; it cannot be rolled out by the yard or the bushel; the utmost we can do is to use up every hour of farming weather, and to waste no land or manures on weeds.

QUIET PEOPLE.

She was dignified, but not graceful; moral, I should say, without delicacy; with common sense, but little taste; and apparently wealthy, without talent of any kind. She was tall, but there was no breadth about her person, though she certainly was not thin. She had no superfluity of waist, nor, to adopt Falstaff's pun, waste of any kind, though she was not spare and meagre. There was plenty of bone and muscle, but they lacked fleshly covering, and the blood revelled not in veins like hers. It was impossible that I could like the lady; yet she must have been liked, for she was married. Her husband was above the common size, with a full, handsome countenance, inclined to sensuality, but slenderly endowed with intellectual expression. He, it was evident, could not, at any rate, have been fascinated with his companion. Yet they might have been suited to each other, for both appeared to manifest an equal degree of stolidity. They were, indeed, average specimens of respectability, without merit. On horseback, both would have probably looked well enough; for they would have overtopped their steeds nobly, and, I think, the lady might have looked even elegant on a palfrey sufficiently large not to make the contrast too great between her and it. But they were out of place in a fashionable crowd; and I could not imagine them, in any company, maintaining conversation with any degree of intelligence.

Still it was strange that such people should become the subjects of observation. There must have been something to have caused that—something phreno-typical (I hope the word is understood) to compel so much speculation in an unconcerned spectator. But, I have frequently remarked that awkwardness of any kind is of itself suggestive. It indicates a point in the manners of the individual, where art has not interfered, and where, accordingly, a display of natural character may be expected. However, I looked in vain for any such intimation, and therefore my curiosity, if I had any, remained ungratified.

Did they belong to that class of people who have no character except that of station and incapacity? I was both inclined to believe this and to doubt it. I thought, at length, that if their acquaintance could be made in private, they might not be altogether uninteresting as human beings, though essentially common-place in their minds and habits. Over a breakfast-table, now, I imagined, while their appetites were sharp, there might escape them certain signs by which one could detect in them their relative idiosyncracies—a long word which I would willingly change, but cannot—some of the attributes, I mean, belonging to willing and desiring beings, having individual life and passions.

It fell out, at last, in the oddest manner, that I became intimately acquainted with these married specimens of vis inertiæ in ordinary life. Their name was Pilkington. Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington, of Ranelagh Villas, St. John's Wood. My friend Tom Goodwood introduced me at once; they were old acquaintances of his, and readily admitted me into their family circle on his introduction. Next day, I found myself at dinner with them and Tom Goodwood at the villa near the park.

It was a pretty villa enough; but I dislike the low roof and the contracted chamber, so constructed to please the fancy of the architect, not for the convenience of the tenant. Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington, however, were well enough satisfied. The villa was like every other in the neighbourhood, and, therefore, in their eyes, it was all that it should be. I thought they stared at me, when I hinted an objection to the arrangement of a few little things, daring to doubt whether another kind of contrivance would not have been more useful. It seemed to strike them as a new idea that such matters should be regulated by their utility. They were, in all respects, the same identical kind of things, in the same identical kind of arrangement that were in every other house in the same locality. There was a convention in the furniture, too. All had been sent in from the maker's on a general plan for furnishing the like of such

villas, without the smallest regard to the probable wants or wishes of the purchaser. On first settling, Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington had left the dealer to do what was usual in such cases. This done, they took their own places and were content.

This little incident seemed to let me into the secret of their destiny. They are, said I, a part of the furniture of society, found in it without any special object, saving that of occupying a certain space, and standing in some definite but arbitrary relation with other things, or persons. This reflection soon afterwards struck me as too abstract, and, lest I should become unintelligible to myself, I pursued it no further.

"Well, madam," said I, "and how did you like the performance at the theatre, the other evening? Were you interested in the new drama, or the débutante? I noticed that you carried a very large bouquet, but you were not nigh enough to the stage to throw it with any chance of its ever reaching the spot? It was a pity that the box-keeper placed you so far off."

A shadow of wonder passed over the immobile countenance of Mrs. Pilkington.

"I merely," she said, "had the bouquet, because I thought it was proper when a lady visited the dress-boxes of the Haymarket, that she should have one in her hands. I am sure, I did not know it was a new drama, and have quite forgot the name of the heroine."

"Then you did not enjoy the play much?"

"O, I liked it well enough. But I did not take the trouble to make out the story. I could not help smiling two or three times at what they said. But I felt inclined to take a nap occasionally. The Spanish dancers afterwards were certainly pretty,—but the manner in which they flung out their legs sometimes struck me as odd, and once or twice I thought it improper."

"And is this all?" I mentally exclaimed.

I wondered if it would be possible to get up a conversation with Mr. Pilkington. I resolved on the trial.

"Your wines, sir," said I, "particularly this, might remind one of the Falernian."

"It may," replied Mr. Pilkington, "do so with you; but I never tasted the wine you mention—never, in fact, heard of it."

I was compelled to acknowledge that to me, too, that classical beverage, so far as regarded my actual experience, was as unknown as Mandragora. To pursue the subject was impossible. Horace and Mæcenas had no interest for Mr. Pilkington.

Tom Goodwood, who had behaved himself with his usual ease, and talked moderately not obtrusively during dinner, and chiefly on personal themes, the healths and whereabout of their mutual acquaintance, came at length to my relief.

"Mr. Pilkington has some nice pictures," he said.

"Why," said I, "do you use that convenient term, nice; that common drudge which does all the kitchen business of taste, and should never claim admission to the drawing-room?"

"O," replied he, "don't be so confounded particular. But if you will look at the pictures on the wall, you will probably be rewarded for your trouble."

I rose, with a sort of sad and mock civility.

"O, yes; there are some lovely things here. That is but a composition landscape; yet it is good. And this is not a bad classical subject; far from it."

"Those pictures," said Mr. Pilkington, "were left to me by my father. They were esteemed good furniture for his walls, and are good enough for mine. Some of the figures are, however, not sufficiently dressed—at least, my wife thinks so; for myself, I have no taste in such matters."

"So, madam," I said, "you have a taste for painting? I am glad of it; it is pleasant to have some topic for conversation. But you must not permit a too rigid exclusiveness. I can see no great artistic daring in the disdain of drapery in either of these works. Nor is it safe to judge of the delicacy of a painting by the mere fact of its figures partaking more or less of the nude. It is the motive of the artist that governs the character of the production; and there are some pictures where much drapery is used that are greatly more immoral than others that can boast of little."

"It may be so," replied Mrs. Pilkington, "but, excuse me, I don't understand you. Really, sir, I cannot form an opinion on the point."

And she was right. Notwithstanding what her husband had stated, Mrs. Pilkington had no opinion. What had seemed one was the mere phantom of an opinion—an accidental expression—a chance echo. Neither she nor Mr. Pilkington had any opinion. The world of opinion had not reached them, nor had they made the slightest attempt to reach it.

"You mistake, my dear friend," said Tom Goodwood to me; "Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington are not speculative people; but you will find them eminently practical. Mr. Pilkington is a banker—one of the safest firms—well established; quietly called into being by his father, and quietly nursed into continued existence by himself. Here, now, is a point of business on which he can put you into possession of important facts. Facts, you know, are the things after all."

A chatty conversation certainly ensued, in which Mr. Pilkington cheerfully and calmly related the usual routine of his life. He had inherited all—his place in the world—his place in the counting-house, and even his wife. He had been spared the trouble of courtship. The lady had been an acquaint-

ance from childhood—the daughter of a partner in the firm. They were early affianced by their parents, and in the fulness of time married each other, as a matter of course. Mr. Pilkington rose at the same hour every morning, arrived at the bank at the same minute, looked over the same account-books at stated times in the day, read and answered the necessary correspondence, saw and conversed with such persons as had business at the house and required a personal interview; and, when all this was done, returned home, as regularly as the clock told the hour, to dinner; after which, the evening was in general quietly passed in a game of cards. Sometimes, but rarely, they visited some recognised place of amusement.

Did they like the drama? They said, "Yes," but no opinion was attainable from them as to the rationale of their liking, only it transpired that they did not usually go to tragedy, because they did not wish to cry; nor did they patronise comedy or farce, because they did not like to laugh overmuch. There exists a modern class of piece that provokes neither laughing nor tears, that simply amuses without exciting, and gently stimulates sensation without kindling emotion. This, as far as I could make out, was the style of drama which best pleased Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington.

Ranelagh Villa had a garden, and, as Tom Goodwood thought that some variety was indispensable to me, he proposed that I should pass some half-hour there: assuring me that it was nicely cultivated and disposed, and, indeed, worth looking at. Ere long I found myself in a pleasant arbour, and observed there an acacia or two. I plucked a leaf of the plant, and amused myself with the exhibition of its sensitive properties.

"Strange," I murmured, "that there should be people in the world apparently less sentient and impressible than this plant! What a blessing might some great misfortune prove to Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington. It might make them feel and think; it might compel them to have opinions. If all were like them, however, we should have no political revolutions, at any rate."

"The Pilkingtons are very quiet people," said Tom Goodwood, "but they are very estimable in their way. They never make any demonstration about anything in the world; yet they will do good, if asked. They will even lend you money at need, if you don't want too much; and, though no doubt it will be regularly entered in their accounts, they will never trouble you for the repayment, or even allude to it again. One is perfectly at ease in their society on all such scores. You will find them very quiet people."

We returned into the drawing-room, and shortly afterwards Tom and I took our departure. The Pilkingtons renewed their invitation, and appeared as if, on the whole, I had pleased them. They wished to see me again another day. I readily complied, but why I could hardly tell. And, truly, I can give no adequate reason for my acquiescence.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

Few Englishmen ever troubled themselves to inquire the history and origin of their patron saint. Though the Seven Champions may have been duly devoured in boyhood, and although we have St. George's Channel, St. George's Fields, and St. George's Parishes, Halls, Barracks, Churches, and Places, without number; and although we handle St. George's effigy every day upon our coins, and see it everywhere—from the insignia of one of the highest orders of knighthood, even to the bedaubed signs of our meanest public-houses—yet the generality of us know very little about St. George himself.

The following moving history of the good saint was published for the edification of Englishmen in the seventeenth century. The author declares that he made the abridgment from the Ancient and True English Legend, "whereof there be but two copies remaining in the whole kingdom." He then proceeds, in his own manner, thus:—

St. George was a Gentleman of Cappadocia, handsome and well-made, valiant as his sword, and above all an excellent good Christian. After divers great Journeys, happening to be in a certain City of Lybia, he was forewarned in a Dream, that he should not go from Thence, till further Orders. Near this City there was a deep Lake, the Retreat of a most dreadful and Ruffianly Dragon, the biggest and most Ferocious, that was to be met with in the whole Nation of Dragons. This Monster made terrible Devastations in all the Country round about. Abundance of Adventurous Knights, that had attempted to attack him, had been devoured, and then whole Regiments presumed to overcome him, but, alack! he routed them all with Slaughterous Flight. His Breath I find cast forth a Smoke, thicker, blacker, and in greater quantities than the Funnel of the Biggest Brewhouses in London. Now this cover'd all that durst approach him with thick Darkness, and at the same time made them to suck in a mortal Poison—Did they attack him Behind? with one single whisk of his Tail he straight laid you down a Hundred Men * * * * * Now he was not satisfied like a Reasonable Dragon with Spreading of Terror and Death in all the Villages round his Lake, but forsooth must make himself formidable even in the City, tho' Care had been taken ere this to surround it with very high and thick Walls.

Nobody could peep out of the Gates without great Danger of being snapped up: nay, sometimes this strange Beast would move great Rocks to one side of the Wall, and so, raising of himself upon them, could push his Neck such a long way through the Breaches he had found means to make, that he was sure to lay Hold of some poor Passenger—Forasmuch as his Tongue did push out and draw in again like a kind of zig-zag, and at the end of it, darting things, like Fish-hooks: so that when he had occasion to launch it at a company of Peasants in the Market Place, he could thread you Fifteen or Twenty of them at once, and whip them away with such a fine dexterity, that they were no sooner spitted than they were in his Maw. Well, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City found it necessary to assemble all the People, in order to consult, as to what was to be done.

The Assembly being met—it was on the 12th of February, 299 (Under the Emperor Dioclesian): it was resolved to consult the Oracle Gribouligri, which was in sooth the Famousest in all Lybia. Now this Devil of an oracle, in all likelyhood was in League with the Monster of the Lake, and made answer with tiny Bellowings like twenty Oxen, that 'twas in vain to hope to be ever absolutely delivered from the Dragon; but he thought they might perhaps obtain free Egress and Regress, if for his Subsistance, they would allow him every Day, a certain number of Animals not smaller than Sheep—either Sheep or Pigs, Women or Maids.

The Deputies having given an account of their Commission, great Groanings arose thereupon. However it was thought, 'twould be the wisest to submit. For two and thirty Days, did they satisfy the decree of this scurvy Oracle without being as yet obliged to expose any human Creature to the monster's wem [stomach], Because with much ado, they had made a shift to get hitherto a sufficient number of Camels and other Animals, but the Thirty-Third Day, they could not for the Blood of 'em, find enow, so that instead of Forty, they did give him, two Less than his Number. Now the Beast finding in the end, that he did want two dishes to make up his Repast, fell on a sudden to Roaring withal at them, so horribly that indeed he did throw down most of the Chimneys in the City. To express the Fright of the Inhabitants would be impossible, and much less the Bitterness and Sorrow, that now oppressed them. But indeed they were forced to cast Lots immediately, and rather suffer the loss of two of Themselves, than see their whole City bellowed about their Ears. Well, the Lot fell upon the Son of one of the Richest Citizens, and the Daughter of the First Syndic, whose name was Rongulphus—Truly a most Lamentable Thing, seeing the Youth, the Beauty, and other qualities of the Lovely pair—Yet, notwithstanding the Tears of all, the Decree was just about to be executed, when a wise old Gentleman bethought him of a way to save them, which was to expose two Criminals instead. I shall not here describe the Joy, or the Happy Destiny, which united those two Happy Souls for ever in Marriage—No! this would carry me too far from my subject—But yet it is to be noted, that these young Folks had been in Love with each other, as it would seem for a weary while, and that the Father of the Maid, being a most Covetuous Man, had always hitherto Opposed the Match. Well after this Scurvy Dragon had chopped up the two Criminals, he grew more quiet, and anon retired to the gulphs of his Lake, his usual Abode.

Alas! the next Day, Thirteen Beasts, or Men, were wanting to the Dragon's Number. Here be New Afflictions! What shall they do!—They once more cast Lots, and the thirteen black Billets fall on as many Virgins most gracious and well Favoured (These be the true words of the old translation of the Annals of Lybia) among which was the King's (Comoriko, third of that name) only daughter. The Devil of a Surety had a hand in all this—not that his Friend the Dragon cared one jot more for the Flesh of a tender dainty fine Virgin, than for the tough Hide of an old Buffalo, for withal, he was such a cursed Dragon, that he swallowed all without chewing; Be it as it will, notwithstanding the offers the King made, to take off the Taxes, to give all the Gold in the Treasury—Nay Forsooth the half of his Kingdom, and his fine golden Crown even from his Head, for the Redemption of his Daughter—but No Boddy would hearken to him, and the rather, perhaps, that the Misfortune of the delicate fair young Princess, was a great Consolation to the other twelve Girls. Therefore did he submit to the hard Law of the Oracle Gribouligri without Exception of Persons.

So the twelve Virgins, were all arrayed in Mourning (as is the Fashion of Lybia) in white Robes spotted with red. But the Princess was decked with Magnificent and Royal Habits. Well, the Hour being come, when the Monster issued from his slimy Lake, the Thirteen Victims after all their Mournful Farewells, were led out of the Gates and sent upon their sad fate. Now the Courage of these Charming dainty young Maids, was incomparable. And in Good Sooth, I cannot help observing thus much by the way:—in those days, to die for one's Country, was the highest and Goodliest pitch of Glory; but, as young Women folkes do very seldom have a Taste for such refined Pleasures, I will here maintain, that there is Reason to admire the firmness of Mind of these young Gentlewomen of Lybia.

As they were walking upon the side of that

dusky Lake, behold a Knight, armed cap-a-pie, upon a milk-white Horse, came riding by the thirteen Maidens, who were just then singing a dismal Song bewailing their Virginity. They were surprised to see a man so equipped; for indeed they had never seen the Like, and they were amazed no less that he should expose himself to a Danger, which they did believe inevitable. The Knight's Surprise was even greater to meet so extraordinary a company in such a Place.

"Beautiful Angels," (says he, accosting them), "what find you in this unsavoury Nook of Earth, to make you prefer it to your Glorious Abode? Deign, I do conjure you, Honor me with a word in Answer."

"Thrice Noble Knight," quoth the King's Daughter, "we are Maidens of Silene." And so the Maidens told their whole story to the courteous Gentleman, who forsooth must tell them his—Imprimis, that his Name was George, that he was the son of the Celebrated Captain Afrino Barzanes, one of the great Lords of Cappadocia. He added, that his Name of George was a Christian name; for that he had listed himself in a company of Christians. Now this Princess had never heard of Christians; but, as George was a very holy Man, and endowed with miraculous Virtues, he did convert her in a very little time, there and then; but all of a sudden the Water was seen to swell like a Mountain over the deepest part, which was the Monster's Habitation, and at the same time the horrid Beast put out its whole Head, casting about most fiery Looks, and vomiting whole Clouds of Smoke. For Brevity's sake, I will here omit what took place between the bold St. George and the Beauteous Cleodolinda; for the Monster, having laid Eyes upon the Tribute sent him by the People of Silene, proceeds lazily to creep his slimy length to Shore. The Knight drew back some five hundred Paces from the Lake, placed the Maidens nigh him, bidding them be of Good Cheer, and anon mounts me his Horse. Now as soon as ever that Ruffianly Dragon saw him, he Falls me a roaring more furiously than Ever. Ah! but St. George to astonish him took from his Pocket a little Box, all done with lace of Hungary, made by St. Epiphania's own Hands, the Mother of the Three Kings; which Box contained his Relicks. He first drew me out Adam his usual string of Beads, the Cross whereof, was made of Unicorn's horn, and the Beads of the teeth of that Fish that Swallowed up Jonah. You should have seen the Dragon shake his Ears—And how he did sweat and Froth at the Mouth! Indeed we are told, some of the Foam did fall upon Cleodolinda her goodly Vestment, but St. George wiped it off so cleverly, with the tail of his Horse, that he left never a mark. This Scurvy Monster even gave back two Steps, but resuming Courage advanced again, bounded three times up into the air like a lightsome Goat, and was just ready to throw himself on the Saint, whom he would have utterly demolished, if he had not betaken himself to his Abracadabras. But instead, There lies your Dragon, quite overcome by the Holy Talisman—Nay! he succumbs now, he creeps me, he shows by a thousand Postures of a Fawning Dog, that he yields entirely to his Conqueror.

O! the Joy of the Virgins, and all the demonstrations they made of it ravisht the Holy Knight. He, well assured that for the Future the Dragon would be as tame as a Lamb, alighted from his War-Steed, and came near to him, and for fear some venomous Vapors should still exhale, he takes me out his little vial of Holy Water, and rubbed several parts of him with it, especially his Tongue and his Tayle. Then, he beckoned Cleodolinda and her Companions to draw near, and view in safety the vanquished Monster. * * * * They made one another a thousand compliments; but Night drawing on, and St. George being resolved to make the King's Daughter enter that very Day in Triumph into Silene, begged of her to lend him her Garter; turning reverently away, like a Godly Gentleman as he was, the while she did it. He then tyed one End of it to one of the Haires in the Dragon's Nostrils and then presented the other End, with a courtly bow to the Princess, at the same time clapping in her other hand the Tayle of one of Sampson's Foxes to chastise the Monster withal, if that he should chance to be mutinous.

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It would be too tedious to represent the Terror, Admiration, and Joy successively felt by the People of Silene. At length, being a little recovered, they all began to think of paying to the Deliverer the Honours due to him; and, indeed, the Lord only knows what the good People of Silene had done in that Humour, but that the Saintly Gentleman's Modesty opposed everything that looked like Vanity. Nay, he would not, at first, so much as marry the Charming Cleodolinda, alleging for his Reason his Regard of Single Life; but being over-persuaded, he did marry her, and they had as many Lovely Children as there be months in the year.

Meanwhile the Devil, who is always a minding of his business (in which only article, be it said, he doth unwittingly show a Notable example to Mankind, who he ever found preferring the minding of any body Elses) began to put new Spirits into the Dragon, who all this while, it seems, had been kept away among many other rare Creatures in the King's Menagerie. St. George, being advertised of this, now resolved to despatch him entirely. He then gave orders he should be carry'd into the Forest,

and there be tyed to twelve great Oaks, till that he dy'd of Hunger. Well, the thing was in part executed, but the Virtue of the Relicks having somewhat evaporated, and the Monster having broken divers of his Chains—he roamed about for some days in the Wood, knocking down the Trees like Reeds and Rushes with his Tayle—and it was then—and so—that worthy St. George Fought him as we do see in the Pictures.

He marched out from Silene, with all the brave Youth of the City in a goodly Procession; and, having found the Monster, he brandished his Lance against him so furiously, that he slew and utterly discomfited him without Remedy. I shall only add, that the English took this Holy Gentleman for their Patron, Because that two of the above-mentioned Virgins, who were English Women, or rather, the Daughters of two English Merchants of much substance and worth [named Edward Smith of Cockermouth in Cumberland, and also Richard Tomson of Canesham in Somersetshire] did consecrate themselves to him after their deliverance, and he promised that he would always protect them, and all the People of their Nation—which indeed he hath done ever since.

Thus ends the abridged Chronicle. The facete compiler's exactitude with regard to the names and counties of the fathers of young lady converts, is only paralleled by the punctilious minuteness of date, as to the particular day in the year "two hundred and ninety-nine [under the Emperor Dioclesian"] when "The Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Silene" determined to consult the oracle.

The exaggerations of this abridgment are not violent departures from the text of the Monkish legend of St. George, upon which our affection for him is after all founded. There is little doubt that the author intended to satirise Dr. Heylin, and the other romantic historians—or rather rhapsodists, who followed in his wake, and who about that time, were severely handled by the critics.

A FLAT WALK.

It is something to say that I have walked from Calais to Guines; if only from the moral certainty that no English professor of literature—having the slightest pretensions to sanity—can possibly have performed the pilgrimage before me, or is at all likely to undertake it after me.

And yet I enjoyed myself, as I usually do when I find myself, in tolerable health and in decent weather, walking in a strange country, without the slightest idea where I am going to. There is one thing—amongst a few others within the range of human capacity—that I never could do. That is to return, willingly, from any pedestrian excursion whatsoever by the same route as that by which I set out.

Therefore, when I found myself the other morning, at a distance of two miles from Calais (which is quite near enough to be to that by no means entertaining city at any time), walking along the bank of a canal which I had not known was in existence ten minutes previously; and when I descried, from the aspect of the country, that my only chance of speedy return to my ill-chosen city of temporary refuge would be by retracing my steps, I mentally resolved that I would see Calais still farther first. Rather than recover a single foot of the ground I had gone over, I would follow that canal to Jericho.

I had no occasion to go to Jericho, as the canal stops at Guines. So do I on this memorable occasion. But, not until I have met with the following adventures, and made the following observations.

The country is perfectly flat; and, as a rule, I object to pollard poplars as the sole accidents in a landscape. I am not sufficiently a man of business to be consoled by a reflection as to the great facilities the canal company must have enjoyed for their engineering operations. I find myself, on the whole, regretting that they had not a few mountains to cut through on their way to bankruptcy. But, I do not dwell upon the subject as my attention is suddenly arrested by something that interests me.

To my left (the canal is on my right), I see a dyke, traversed by a bridge, surmounted by a wooden realisation of my youthful conceptions of a gallows (I have never had the courage to go and look at a real one, though I have often wanted to). On the transverse beam, painted in bold Roman capitals, I read the following inscription:—

Il est défendu de se baigner dans ce Watter-gand.

The Watter-gand itself is a mere ditch, wherein no self-respecting frog would care about bathing, even with legal impunity. But, the Flemish word—familiarly read, excites a strange thrill in my system. It is the first indication of approach to an unknown country. I am getting among the Flemings, whom I have never seen, or spoken to. I experience something of that feeling which must assert itself at New Orleans, at sight of the first Mexican poncho; at Perth when you meet the first kilt; at Smyrna when turbans cease to be conspicuous; at middle life when the first wrinkle, or the first grey hair insists upon prominence in the looking-glass. I walk on, musing on the mutability of human affairs, and the fallacy of things in general. I hear somebody speaking bad English. It is not foreign English; but the genuine native article as I have been accustomed to hear it corrupted from my youth. There are

two boys fishing, brothers evidently, for the elder is bullying the younger beyond the mere warranty of size, weight, and seniority. The younger is—What? Good Heavens! As I live a blue-coat boy in full costume! I am disgusted—not merely at the bad grammar, for I am used to that sort of thing: but at the young scoundrel's shameless presence, under the circumstances. What business has he here among the poplars and watter-gands bringing his nation into contempt by his ridiculous outfit? Does he mean to tell me he has no pocket-money? Could he not buy a blouse? The merest chimney-sweep in Calais knows that they are cheap enough! Could he not conceal his shame (and mine), in a borrowed suit of his not very big brother? He is afraid to ask him—the wretched little coward! I pass the unpatriotically minded blue-coat boy with loathing; and hope (without seriously doubting) that his senior will give him a speedy hiding.

I console myself in a British manner by contrasting the French wheat with the general condition of that plant as I left it a week or so back in our own favoured isle. I find an average of about six tufts of a very tall species of flag-grass to every ear of corn. There is comfort in this. My vision is no longer tormented by the sight of a dark blue robe with a strap round the middle, and a pair of unearthly yellow stockings.

Hah! What cry is that? It is the howl as of a blue-coat boy in the extremity of physical suffering. I go on my way re-appeased and rejoicing.

I must treat myself to some refreshment. Here is a junction of the canal with a branch that leads to some other no-where, like that I am so busily walking to. There is an estaminet here—aux rendezvous des canotiers. I am not a canotier, it is true; but surely those jovial mariners will not refuse a way-worn traveller the use of their rendezvous. I enter on the speculation. The canotiers have not yet rolled up in very enthusiastic numbers, or indeed in any numbers at all, for the rendezvous is empty. It looks, moreover, so preternaturally clean, as to make it improbable that any representative of the pitch and tar interests could ever have sat down in it. The estaminet is a large, roomy apartment, capable of accommodating any quantity of canotiers, if they would only take the trouble to come—and is quaintly furnished in a half-French, half-Flemish manner. But, from the moment of my entrance to my departure, I have eyes for one article of furniture alone. This is the clock.

I believe it to be the tallest clock that ever was seen. It is a clock which might be shown with pecuniary advantage in a caravan at a fair. Associated with — say George the Fourth's celebrated watch, that he wore set in a ring on his little finger—for contrast—I am sure it would beat the combined forces of Mr. Hales and General Tom Thumb out of any field. The clock has further the appearance of having grown to its present extraordinary dimensions in the room where it stands. I have framed a theory on the subject. I believe that some years ago a squat, paunchy little time-piece was planted on the floor; and, by the action of some mysterious Jack in the Beanstalk, it shot suddenly up till it reached the ceiling. Then, of course, its growth was stopped which was, perhaps, fortunate; for the tall clock has already the look of having run entirely to case, and is weak in the works.

I cannot stand looking at a clock all day, even at a phenomenon of the species nine feet high, by scarcely as many inches wide. The landlady (who is rather pretty, but not half the height of the clock), appears to think so, too, and to take my scrutiny of her household ornament somewhat in dudgeon. She asks me rather sharply what I desire. I apologise, and desire a "chope." I am supplied with a pennyworth of the most ridiculously French beer I ever met with—it is nearly all froth—occupies a great deal of room and attention, is very unmanageable, makes an immense noise about nothing, is entirely without body; and yet, on the whole, is rather agreeable than otherwise. I drink as much of my beer as will keep off the floor, pay my penny honestly, and, with one parting glance at the landlady and two or three glances at the clock, resume my journey.

I am soon reminded of my recent draught by some French labourers who are stacking hay; they, too, are making an immense deal of fuss with a very disproportionate display of strength. Johnson says that Frenchmen—in this part of the country, at least—make their haystacks as they do their houses—nearly all roof. They moreover waste a great deal of hay in ropes, which are connected on the vertex of the stack and allowed to hang down all round it like bell-pulls. I confess I do not see the policy of this. It is like cutting up all your leather into laces, and leaving none for your boots. I think the farmers of the Pas de Calais fortunate in that they are not obliged to employ Irish haymakers; these haystack ornaments would offer such temptation for the manufacture of the national stocking, as no high-principled Emeralder would be able to resist.

The next object of interest is an old gentleman fishing. He is seated in an armchair in front of his own door. It is a tolerably fine day, but he wears a camlet cloak. I suppose if it were to come on to rain, his housemaid would come out with an umbrella to hold over him. I can read the programme of this old gentleman's daily existence at a glance. He has taken this house for the facility of fishing in the canal.

He breakfasts early, and then has his arm-chair brought out. He fishes till he is called into dinner. After dinner he has his coffee brought out to him on the canal bank—he fishes till bed-time, and gets up in the morning to fish again.

I scarcely deign to glance at the interior of his fishing-basket, I feel convinced beforehand that he has caught nothing. I doubt if this obviously weak-minded old gentleman ever catches anything except rheumatism. Ten to one he uses the wrong sort of bait, or hooks that are too large, or there is some screw loose about his float. I am not a judge of these matters, but I can see he is not—or of any other matters. The money with which he has purchased the lease or freehold of the comfortable house on the canal bank must have become his by inheritance. Such a man could never have got on in business!

I approach him, and give him an affable good day (for it is useless being hard upon him—he can't help it); he returns my greeting with desponding politeness; he is nervous when spoken to; he is conscious of his deplorable deficiency in powers of conversation. I look at him more closely, and see that he is a greater fool than I had anticipated. I pretend not to see the empty basket, and ask him in an airy tone if he has had good sport. He shakes his head with the wan smile of a martyr, as who should say,—

O! no indeed, sir! you are very kind, but there is no such luck for a poor devil like me! Pray don't suspect me capable of wishing you to believe I ever catch fish.

I ask him what fish are to be found in the canal. He shakes his head more despairingly than before, and replies in a wretched tone of voice:

"Nothing worth having. Only perch and roach—ichthyological genera, which, he assures me, with something like a faint attempt at bitterness, are "mauvais poissons! très mauvais!"

"Any gudgeons?"

The smile of martyrdom becomes almost waggish as he shakes his head a third time in negation of so wild an hypothesis. Gudgeons. O dear, no! Not for the likes of him, at any rate!

I feel strongly inclined to say to him,

"Then, you helpless old donkey, what do you mean by wasting even your worthless time by sitting here, hour after hour, in a pursuit that is neither amusing to yourself nor serviceable to your fellow creatures? Go in-doors and learn the flute, or build a summer-house, or help your wife to get the dinner ready, or to wash the children, or something!

But I don't say it. The humanity of my disposition combats the outbreak. I wish him a cold good morning, and leave him watching for the bite that will never come.

The next incident in order is the wonderful adventure of the magpies, which I will describe as it took place. I should premise that I was brought up a country boy, and am only just the least bit in the world ashamed to confess that lingering influences of some country superstitions still cling to me. Amongst them I may name a belief still current in the west of England (it was there I learnt it), that to meet a single magpie is unlucky, while to encounter a pair of the same birds at once is quite the reverse. This, I have been informed, rightly or wrongly, by old sportsmen, is not without a foundation in truth, to be explained on purely natural grounds. They say that, in certain unfavourable conditions of the atmosphere, the male magpie leaves the nest alone in search of food; whereas, assured by contrary indications, he takes his wife with him. Whether the magpie be really such a gallant personage and model husband I leave it for ornithologists to decide. I pass to my adventure.

I saw two magpies in a field on my right (the canal was now on my left, for I had crossed a bridge at the junction). I felt my spirits raised perceptibly. Of course I should feel insulted if anybody charged me with believing in so contemptible a superstition as that of odd or even in the matter of magpies; and, of course, I can reason away anything of the kind as cleverly as most people. But I suppose I am not the first to discover that habit is stronger than reason; and I had been taught at a very early age to believe that the accidental meeting with two magpies was a cheering and propitious omen.

Reason or no reason, I felt that I should soon recover from my indigestion (chronic inflammation of the gastric organs, as Doctor Humm called it, at the rate of a guinea per word,—all I ever got for my money). I should be able to see my way to that last act which my tragedy has been anxiously expecting these four years. All my articles would be approved of and inserted with rapidity. A complimentary note from the Conductor of this journal, announcing an important augmentation per column—in consideration of increased excellence—also loomed in the distance. I should grow in wit, and worth, and sense, unheeding critic's pen and that unpleasant lack of power which has not proved eternal to Mr. Tennyson, but which still vexes myself and other servants of the public. I should marry Julia, live to a good old age, and die happy.

In this hopeful frame of mind, I walked on with an elastic step towards a corner of the road that I felt would discover beauties in the landscape as yet undreamt of. I turned the corner, and saw—standing in the middle of the road, apparently waiting expressly for my arrival:

A SINGLE MAGPIE!

Perhaps he was one of two I had just seen? I tried to hope so; but the attempt

at self-deception was futile. They had flown away long ago, in an opposite direction. Perhaps the mate of this one was near at hand, and to meet with two pairs of magpies in one morning was only doubly to assure the good fortune in store for me. Vain fallacy! there was nothing before me but the macadamised road—nothing on either side of me but the canal and flat unfenced corn-fields. I could have detected a tomtit within a quarter of a mile. And the worst of it was, the abominable bird refused to move out of my path. He stood hopping about and pecking at something, occasionally looking up to caw at me, like the concentrated essence of Hecate, the Three Witches, and Edgar Poe's Raven, combined I stood looking at the magpie, and the magpie stood cawing, or rather screeching at me.

I tried sophistry. I said, to myself, how ridiculous it was to be affected by superstitions, whose simple origin was so easy of demonstration. But I felt there was some meanness in this, as, having previously turned the two magpies to my hopeful advantage, I had no right to repudiate the evil powers of one. Why should I insult this magpie, by assuming that he didn't know his particular branch of the prophetic business, as well as the two others did theirs? At any rate, I wished he would get out of the way, but he wouldn't.

Then I asked myself whether the good luck, promised by the two first magpies, were not sufficiently assured by their combined influence to defy the subsequent malignity of this single bird's interference? Surely if two heads were better than one, in a general sense, why not in the particular case of magpies? But, then I reflected that, if I had met this magpie first and the pair afterwards, I should certainly have accepted the latter omen. It was clearly my business to believe in this magpie. It was all up with the tragedy, the articles, and Julia! Humm was right. The inflammation of the gastric organs was doomed to be chronic. I even felt the ill-effects of my early breakfast, then. Still I saw no necessity for submitting, tamely, to the magpie's insolence; so I threw a stone at him. He flew on a few yards, and alighted on a heap of rubbish, cawing at me more viciously than ever. I threw another stone; he flew a little further, but steadily refused to diverge from the high road. There must be something in the superstition after all (which, in the other instance I merely pretended to believe for the fun of the thing). This bird, contrary to the habits of furtive cowardice, for which his species is renowned, dogs my footsteps, will not be intimidated, but attends me even to the threshold of a human dwelling, to taunt me with an impending fate that is to crush me.

Surely I shall get rid of him when he approaches that house. It is a road-side cabaret. I can hear the voices of noisy topers within, from this distance. Their tumult must certainly scare him to the fields. It will be some relief to lose sight of him, and forget the absurd forebodings that it would be useless to deny he has given rise to.

Horror! he stops before the door of the cabaret, and perches on a horse-trough!

A little more of this will drive me mad. I am close to him, and the inmates of the cabaret are more noisy than ever. Still the bird will not move. In two steps I shall be able to brain him with my thick walking-stick, and I'll be hanged if I don't do it.

I make a furious but unsuccessful lunge at the magpie. He screeches a little, apparently as a mere matter of form, and not at all as though he felt seriously alarmed; hops off his perch majestically; and, with the utmost deliberation, enters the cabaret.

I am seized with a slight vertigo, the most proximate cause of which is a consciousness of extreme foolishness. A new light has broken upon me, too humiliating in its tendencies to be endured, if avoidable. I would rather not believe the evidence of my senses if possible. I enter the cabaret in the forlorn hope of hearing them contradicted.

"Pardon," I demand, in a faltering voice, and—as I can feel—blushing horribly; "but—pray excuse me—does it happen that a Magpie has lately entered here?"

"A magpie? Yes, monsieur. Behold that magpie!"

Behold him! sure enough seated majestically at the entrance of a wicker-cage. I wish the earth would open and swallow me, more especially when the landlady, in a mocking voice, adds the inquiry,

"Possibly he has a little frightened you, monsieur? You have rather the air of it."

"Frighten me?" If she had only known how much!

"Not at all," I falter abjectly, and, as I am aware, with a thoroughly criminal aspect. It is a relief, however, to find that they did not see me trying to murder their pet. "That is to say, if I had any fear at all, it was that you might lose him."

"Not at all, monsieur! He is exactly like one of the family. He walks about, alone, wherever he will, and everybody knows him hereabouts. My husband let him out just now, to play with this little boy here."

"Bien! une chope de bière, s'il vous plait."

"L' voilà, m'sieu!"

I walk rapidly for about three miles, but do not recover my equanimity, till I find a busy townful of people looking at me and wondering what has happened to disturb me. The town is Guines.

" *Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

I BEGIN MY JOURNEY.

"I THANK heaven," I said, when I came to Erquellines, on the Belgian frontier, "that I have done, for some time at least, with the deplorable everyday humdrum state of civilisation in which I have been vegetating so long, and growing so rankly weedy. Not that I am about to forswear shaving, renounce pantaloons, or relinquish the use of a knife and fork at meal-times. I hope to wear clean linen for many successive days to come, and to keep myself au courant with the doings of London through the media of Galignani's Messenger and the Illustrated News (thrice blessed be both those travellers' joys!). Nay, railways shall penetrate whither I am going, mixed pickles be sold wholesale and retail, and pale ale be attainable at a more or less exorbitant price. I am not bound for the Ethiopio-Christian empire of Prester John; I am not bound to sail for the island of Barataria; my passport is not made out for the kingdom of Utopia (would that it were); I cannot hope, in my journeyings, to see either the Yang-tse-Kiang, or the sources of the Nile, or the Mountains of the Moon. I am going, it is true, to t'other side of Jordan, which somewhat vague (and American) geographical definition may mean the other side of the Straits of Dover, or the Grecian Archipelago, or the Great Belt, or the Pacific Ocean. But, wherever I go, civilisation will follow me. For I am of the streets, and streety—*eis ten polin* is my haven. Like the starling, I can't get out of cities; and now, that I have come sixteen hundred miles, it is but to another city—another tumour of streets and houses and jostling crowds; and from my windows I can see a post, and wires stretching from it, the extreme end of which I know to be in Lothbury, London.

I am not so wisely foolish to imagine or to declare that there is nothing new under the sun; only the particular ray of sunlight that illumines me in my state of life has fallen upon me so long, and dwells on me with such a persistent sameness, bright as it is, that I am dazed, and sun-sick; and, when I shut my eyes, have but one green star before me, which obstinately refuses to assume the kaleidoscopic changes I delight in. I must go away, I said. I must rub this rust of soul and body off. I must have a change of grass. I want strange dishes to disagree with me. I want to be scorched or frozen in another latitude. I want to learn another alphabet; to conjugate verbs in another fashion; to be happy or miserable from other circumstances than those that gladden or sorrow me now. If I could be hard up, for instance, on the Bridge of Sighs, or wistfully eyeing my last real at the Puerta del Sol; if I could be sued on a bill drawn in the Sanskrit character, or be threatened with arrest by a Mahometan hatti sheriff's-officer; if I could incur perdition through not believing in the seven incarnations of Vishnu, instead of the thirty-nine Articles; if I could be importuned for copy by the editor of the Mofussilite, and not the Morning Meteor; if I could have the plague, or the vomito nero, or the plica polonica, instead of the English headache and blues, the change would be advantageous—salutary, I think. I am sure I should be much better off if I could change my own name, and forget my own self for a time. But Oh! civilisation and foreign office passport system—George William Frederick Earl of Clarendon, Baron Hyde of Hindon, won't hear of that. I have made up my mind to change; I am determined, I said, to depart out of this kingdom; but the Earl and Baron insists on stamping, and numbering, and registering me (all for the small sum of seven and sixpence) before I go. George William Frederick pounces upon me as a British subject travelling abroad; asserts himself, his stars and garters, at great length, all over a sheet of blue foolscap paper, affectionately entreats all authorities, civil and military, to render me aid and assistance whenever I stand in need of them (I should like to catch them doing anything of the sort!), and sends me abroad with the royal arms, his own, and a five-shilling receipt stamp tacked to me, like a bird with a string tied to his leg.

I am bound on a stern, long, cruel, rigid journey, far, far away, to the extreme right-hand top corner of the map of Europe—but first Due North. And here I am at Erquellines on the frontier of the kingdom of Belgium; and this is why I thanked Heaven I was here. Not very far northward is Erquellines; and yet I felt as if I had passed the Rubicon, when a parti-coloured sentry-box,

the counterfeit presentment of the peculiarly sheepish-looking Belgian lion sitting on his hind-legs, with the legend "Union is strength" (and, indeed, I think it would take a good many of those lions to make a strong one), and a posse of custom-house officers—kindly, but pudding-headed in appearance—told me that I was in the Royaume de Belgique.

I am, under ordinary travelling circumstances, exceedingly fond of the compact little kingdom of King Leopold. I look at it as a fat, sensible, easy-going, respectable, happy-go-lucky sort of country. Very many pleasant days and hours have its quaint, quiet cities, its roomy farm-houses, its picture galleries, and sleepy canal-boats, its beer, and tobacco afforded me. I cannot join in the patriotic enthusiasm about "les braves Belges," because I consider the Belgians—being a sensible people—to be the very reverse of valiant; neither can I sympathise much with the archæological public-spiritedness of those Belgian savants who are anxious to restore the Flemish language to its primeval richness and purity, and have published the romance of Reynard the Fox in the original Low Dutch. As I think it to be the most hideous dialect in Europe, I would rather they had let it be. And, to say the truth, I am rather tired of hearing about the Duke of Alva, and of the Countess of Egmont and Horn—though both worthy men in their way, doubtless—whose decollation and behaviour prior to and following that ceremony the Belgian painters have a mania for representing only second to our abhorred Finding of the Body of Haroldophobia. And specially do I object to, and protest against, in Belgium the Field of Waterloo and all appertaining thereto; the knavish livery-stable keepers in Brussels, who swindle you if you take a conveyance to the field; the beggars on the road; the magnified dustheap with the abashed poodle fumbling with a ball of worsted on the summit, and called the Mountain of the Lion; the disforested forest of Soignies; the indifferent outhouse called the farm of Hougomont, and the Voice from Waterloo, by the deceased Sergeant Major Cotton. But I love Belgium, nevertheless—so did Julius Cæsar. Antwerp—though the multiplicity of Rubenses give me almost as much of a surfeit as a month's apprenticeship in a pastrycook's shop would do—Antwerp is my delight: I can wander for hours in that marvellous amalgam of the Alhambra, the Crystal Palace, and a Flemish mansion, the exchange, and on the port I fancy myself in Cadiz, now in Venice, now in some old English seaport of the middle ages. Of Brussels it behoves me to speak briefly, and with retinence, for that charming, sparkling, lively, genial, warm-hearted little capital holds the very next place in my affections to Paris the beloved. Yet I stay only as many hours in Brussels, as were I on another errand I should stay days. Due North is my destination, so I go to Liege. I can't help gazing till I am satiated at the wondrous panorama that stretches out before me as we descend the four or five hundred feet gradient of descent that leads into the valley of the Meuse, and as the train slides down the precipitous almost fearful inclined plain I drink in all the marvels of the scene, enhanced as they are by the golden evening sunlight. I watch the domes and cupolas and quaint church spires, and even the factory chimneys, glorified into Oriental minarets by the delusive rays of the setting sun. Much should I like to alight at Liege, and seeking my inn take my rest there; but an inward voice tells me that I have no business in Liege, that still Due North is my irrevocable route, and so I let the train go on its rattling roaring route, and compose myself to sleep till it shall carry me at its gruff will and pleasure over the frontier of Prussia.

So; at last at Herbesthal, and beneath the sway of the Belgian lion's harmless tail no longer. I am testy and drowsy, and feel half inclined to resent, as a personal affront, the proceedings of a tall individual cloaked, moustachioed, and helmeted, who appears Banshee-like at the carriage, pokes a lantern in my face, and, in the Teutonic tongue, demands my passport. I remember, however, with timely resignation, that I am going Due North, to the dominions of Ursa Major, the great Panjandrum of passports, and that I am as yet but a very young bear, indeed, with all my passport-troubles to come; so I give the Baron Hyde of Hindon's letter of recommendation to the man in the helmet, and fall into an uneasy sleep again. I hope it may do him good!

Was it at Liege or Pepinstern on the Spa Road (how different from that other Spa Road station, I know, on the Greenwich Railway, where attic-windows blink at the locomotive as it rushes by, and endless perspectives of the ventilated brick lanes and fluttering clothes-lines tell of the ugly neighbourhood where outlying tanners dwell, and railway stokers live when they are at home; whereas this Spa Road is a delicious little gorge between purple underwooded hills, with gaily-painted cottages, and peasant-women in red petticoats, and little saints in sentry-boxes by the way-side, and along which I see ladies on horseback, and moustachioed cavaliers careering towards Spa, one of the most charming little watering-places in Europe);—at which station was it, I wonder, that we changed the lumbering, roomy, drablined first-class carriages of the Nord, with their sheep-skin rugs, and zinc hot-water boxes, for these spruce, glistening, coquettish carriages, so daintily furbished out with morocco leather, and plate-glass, and varnished mahogany—(when will English railway-travellers be emancipated from the villanous, flea-bitten pig-boxes, first, second and third-class, into which, after paying exorbitant fares they are thrust)—when was

it that an imperceptible fluffiness, and albine tendency of hat, a shinyness of cap-peaks, an eccentricity of boot-tips, a braidiness of coats, a prevalence of embroidered travelling-pouches, a greenness of veils, a twinkling of spectacles, a blondness of beards, a gaudiness of umbrellas, and a gutturalness of accent, together with the bold and sudden repudiation of the doctrine that tobacco-smoking on railways is prohibited, and must only be furtively indulged in (the major part of the smoke finding its way up the coat-sleeve) with the reluctantly extorted consent of the young ladies who have nerves, and the pettish old gentlemen, and, above all, a wavering, mysterious, but potent smell, a drowsy compound of the odours of pomatum, sauerkraut, gas-meters, and stale tobacco-smoke, told me that I had crossed another frontier, and that I was in Germany?

The train being once more in motion in its way (south this time) towards Cologne, I perused my passport by the light of the carriage lamp, and saw where its virgin blueness had been sullied by the first patch of printing ink, scrawled writing and sand forming a visa. The Black Eagle of Prussia had been good enough to flap his wings for the first time on George William Frederick's talisman. He was good for a flight to Köln or Cologne; but he was dated from Aachen, which Aachen I have just left, and which,—bless me! where were my eyes and memory, must have been Aix-la-Chapelle?

I consider it to be an exceedingly lucky circumstance for the reader of this paper that I, the Digressor, did not arrive at the City of Cologne on the Rhine till half-past eleven o'clock at night; that it was pitch dark, and raining heavily; that entering a cab I caused myself to be driven "right away" over the bridge of boats to the Hotel Doopeepel, in the suburbs of Deutz; that, being dog-tired, I went immediately to bed, and that I left Cologne for Berlin by the first train at six a.m. the next morning. I consider this lucky for the reader, because if I had had any time to wander about the streets of Cologne, I should infallibly have launched into dissertations on the cathedral, the market-women, the aforesaid bridge of boats, the horrifying smells, the quaint houses, Jean Marie Farina, and—who knows!—the three kings and the eleven thousand virgins.

Under existing circumstances, all I at present have to say of the place is, that the landlord of the Grand Hotel Doopeepel at Deutz, deserves a civic crown, or a large gold medal, or a sword of honour—at all events he ought to have his deserts; and I should like to have the task of giving him what he deserves, for the skill and ingenuity displayed in making my bill for a night's lodging, and some trifling refreshment, amount to five Prussian dollars or fifteen shillings sterling. The best or the worst of it was, that I could not dispute any of the items. I had certainly had them all. Bed, wax-lights, attendance, coffee, thimbleful of brandy, cigar, loaf of bread like a hardened muffin, couple of boiled eggs; but Oh, in such infinitesimal quantities! As for the eggs, they might have been laid by a humming-bird. The demand of the bill was prodigious, the supply marvellously small, but I paid it admiringly, as one would pay to see a child with two heads, or a bearded lady.

There is a difference of opinion among travelling sages, as to whether a man ought under any circumstances to travel first-class by rail in Germany. The first-class carriages are luxurious—nay, even splendid vehicles, softly ~~[illegible]~~ded, lined with crimson velvet, and extensively decorated with silken fringes and curtains. On the other hand, the second-class carriages are also lined and padded, and are at least seventy-five per cent. more comfortable than our best English first-class carriages. Moreover, in the second-class, there are but two compartments to a seat for four persons, so that, if the carriage be not full, you may recline at full length on the cushions, which, in night-travelling, is very comfortable, and rejoices you much; but then the reverse to that medal is, that German second-class carriages are nearly invariably full to the window sill. The Germans themselves repudiate the first-class stoutly, and it has passed into a Viator's proverb, that none but "princes, Englishmen, and fools, travel by the first-class." I have no particular affection for Englishmen abroad, but I like the company of princes and you may often have worse travelling companions than fools; so I travel, when I can afford it, first-class. There are other temptations thereto. The carriage is seldom more than half-full, if that, and you may change your place when you list, which, in a dragging journey of three hundred and fifty miles or so, is a privilege of no small moment; and you have plenty of side-room for your rugs, and your books, and your carpet-bags. Then, again, there are but six passengers to a carriage instead of eight; and again, besides the possible proximity of his effulgency the reigning Grand Duke of Gumpetpelskirchen-Herrenbonen, the Englishman and the fool, you may have as a travelling companion a lady, young, pretty, tastefully dressed, and adorably affable, as the triumphant majority of German ladies (bless them!) are; and this lady will smile at your mistakes in German, but without wounding your amour propre, and will teach you more of that hard-mouthed language—vivâ voce—in ten minutes than you would learn in a month from a grammar and vocabulary, or from university-professor Doctor Schinkelstrumpf's two-dollar lessons. And this lady (whom you long immediately to call "du," and fall on your knees in the carriage before) will ask you questions about the barbarous country you inhabit, and explain to you the

use and meaning of common things, such as windmills, milestones, and the like, with a naïveté and simple-mindedness, deliriously delightful to contemplate; she will give you little meat-pies and sweet cakes to eat from her own amply-stored bags; she will even—if you are very agreeable and well-behaved—allow you to comfort yourself outwardly with a dash of eau-de-cologne from a silver-mounted phial, and inwardly with a sip from a wicker-covered flask containing a liquid whose nature it is no business of yours to inquire; she will sing you little German songs, and cut the leaves of your book with an imitation poinard;—and all this she will do with such an unaffected kindness and simple dignity that the traveller who would presume upon it, or be rude to her, must be a double-distilled brute and pig, and only fit to travel in the last truck of an Eastern Counties fish-train, or to take care of the blind monkeys in the zoological gardens.

And all good spirits bless and multiply the fair ladies of Germany! They never object to smoking. There are certain carriages—"fur Damen"—into which the men creatures do not penetrate, and from which tobacco smoke is, as a rule, prohibited; but the ladies seldom (the nice ones never) patronise the carriages specially affected to their use. They just take railway luck with the ruder sex; and as for smoking—cigar smoking always understood—they like it; they delight in it. They know, sagacious creatures, that a traveller with a cigar in his mouth is twice a man; that the fumes of the fragrant Havannah loosen the tongue, and open the heart, and dispel awkwardness and diffidence; that he who wants to smoke, and is prevented from smoking, always feels aggrieved and oppressed, and is correspondingly sulky, disobliging and morose. The only drawback to the society of the German lady in the railway is this: that when she alights at a station, and in her silvery voice bids you adieu and bon voyage, there are always waiting on the platform for her other ladies young and pretty as herself, or else moustachioed relations (I hope they are relations), who fall-to kissing her, and pressing both her hands, till you fall into despair, and howl with rage in your crimson velvet prisoners' van. Then the train rolls away, and you feel that there is a nature-abhorred vacuum in the left-hand corner of your waistcoat, and that Fraulein von Name Unknown has taken your heart away with her, and is now, probably, hanging it over her chimney-piece as a trophy, as an Indian chief does the scalps of his enemies to the poles of his hunting lodge.

On this present due northern journey I must confess I did not lose my heart, for we were ladyless all the way; but the average first-class travelling companions I had. There was a prince—so at least I conjectured the asthmatic old gentleman who left us at Dusseldorf to be; for who but a prince could have such a multiplicity of parti-coloured ribbons belonging to as many orders (a little soap and water would have done them a world of good) pinned on the breast of his brown surtout, so much fragrant snuff on his embroidered jabot, and such an impenetrably wise and aristocratic face? Yes, he must have been a prince, with seventy-five quarterings at least. Then there was an Englishman (besides your humble servant), and there was a Fool. Such a fool! He was a Frenchman, fat, fair, and smiling, with some worsted-work embroidery on his head like a kettle-holder pinned into a circular form. There were letters worked on it, and I tried hard to read "Polly put the kettle on," but could not. He was going to Dresden, where he was to stay a week, and exhibited to us every ten minutes or so a letter of credit on a banker there, and asked us if we thought four thousand florins would be enough to last him during his sojourn. He was as profoundly, carelessly, gaily, contentedly ignorant of things which the merest travelling tyro is usually conversant with as a Frenchman could be; but he knew all about the Boulevard des Italiens, and that was quite enough for him. He laughed and talked incessantly, but, like the jolly young waterman, about nothing at all. He could not smoke: it gave him a pain in his limbs, he said; but he liked much to witness the operation. Like most fools, he had a fixed idea; and this fixed idea happened to be a most excellent one—being no other than this, that the German beer was very good (so it is, after the Strasbourg and Biere de Mars abominations), and that it was desirable to drink as much of it as could possibly be obtained. He alighted at every station, to drink a draught of creaming though mawkish beverage, and seemed deeply mortified when the train did not stop long enough for him to make a journey to the buffet, and half inclined to quarrel with me when I persuaded him to take a petit verre of cognac at Minden, as a corrective to the malt. But he was a hospitable and liberal simpleton, and, when we declined to alight, he would come with a beaming countenance and a Tom-fool's joke to the carriage window, holding a great foaming tankard of Bock Bier, or else a bottle of it to last to the next station. I am not ashamed to say that I drank his health several times between Dusseldorf and Hanover, and, what is more, wished him good health with all my heart.

The German railway buffets are capital places of restoration: true oases in the great desert of cuttings and embankments. The fare is plentiful, varied, and cheap—cheap, at least, if you received anything like Christian money in change for the napoleons or five-franc pieces; but what intensity of disgustful reprobation can describe the vile dross that

is forced upon you, that you are ashamed to put in your purse, and half inclined to fling out of the window: the poverty-stricken, clipped, measley, pockmarked, greasy, slimy silbergroschen, neuegroschen, grosgroschen, and gudegroschen (the eulogistic adjectives silver, new, big, good, to these leprous testoons all breathe the bitterest satire). A German refreshment room is a receptacle for all the lame, halt, and blind coins of the Zollverein, the monetary refuse of Russia, Saxony, Bavaria, Austria, Hanover, Mecklenburg, and the infinite variety of smaller tinpot states; nay, you are very lucky if the waiters do not contrive to give you a sprinkling of Hamburg and Lubeck money, with a few Copenhagen shillings and Schleswig-Holstein marks. The rogues know that you have no time to question or dispute; they take care not to give you your change till the starting bell rings, and by the time you have counted the abominable heap of marine-store money, and got over your first outburst of passion, you are half-a-dozen miles away. As a climax of villany, the change they give you at one station is not current, or is said not to be so, at the next. Say, waiter at Bienenbuttel, is not this the case? And didst thou not contumeliously refuse my Prussian piece of ten groschen?

Why should it be that England, the great market of the world, amply provisioned as it is, and with its unrivalled facilities of communication, refreshment-rooms, not only on railways, but in theatres, gardens, and other places of amusement, should be so scantily and poorly furnished, and at such extortionate prices? Why should our hunger be mocked by those dried-up Dead Sea fruits, those cheesecakes that seem to contain nothing but sawdust, those sandwiches resembling thin planks of wood with a strata of dried glue between them, those three weeks old pork and veal pies, all over bumps full of delusive promise, but containing nothing but little cubes of tough gristle and antediluvian fat; those bye-gone buns with the hard, cracked varnish-like veneering; that hopeless cherry-brandy, with the one attenuated little cherry bobbing about in the vase like a shrivelled black buoy; that flatulent lemonade tasting of the cork and the wire and of the carbonic acid gas, but of the lemon never; that bottled brown stout like so much bottled soapsuds; that scalding infusion of birch-broom miscalled tea; and that unsavoury compound of warm plate-washings facetiously christened soup? Why should English railway travellers be starved as well as smashed? Sir Francis Head tells us that they keep pigs at Wolverton, who, in course of time, are promoted into pork pies; but the promotion must surely go by seniority. Look for comparison, at the French buffets, with the savoury soup always ready; the sparkling little carafons of wine, the convenient cotelette, the tempting slices of pâte-de-foie gras, the crisp fresh loaves of bread, and all at really moderate prices. Look again at the German refreshment-rooms. That practical people (though they do indulge in smoking and metaphysics to such an extent) have a system of refreshment called thumb restauration. This consists of the famous butterbrod, or compact little crust of bread and butter on which is laid ham, cold meat, poultry, game, dried salmon, or caviare. Caviare! The first sight of that glistening black condiment startled me, and made me feel Due North more than ever.

Minden, Hanover, Brunswick, have been passed. The armorial white horse made his appearance at the second of these places on the coinage of the poor blind king, and on a flaring escutcheon in front of the railway terminus. At Brunswick there was a fête in honour of the twenty-somethingeth of the anniversary of the accession of the reigning duke, which I suppose must be a source of great annual satisfaction to the sovereign in question, as well as to that other duke who doesn't reign. The terminus was plentifully decorated with evergreens and banners; here was a great deal of dust and music and beer-drinking going on (the chief ingredients, with smoking, of a German fête), and the platform was crowded with Brunswickers in holiday attire. Beaux and belles in Teutonic-Parisian trim, and ruddy, straw-haired and straw-hatted country folk in resplendent gala-dresses. To give you a notion of the appearance of the more youthful female Brunswickers, I must recal to your remembrance the probable appearance of the little old woman, who, going to market, inadvertently fell asleep by the king's highway, and with whose garments such unwarrantable liberties were taken by a wretch by the name of Stout, a tinker by profession. The peasant girls of Brunswick look as the little old woman must have looked when she awoke from her nap; and, so brief are their skirts; but they wear variegated hose with embroidered clocks, and their mothers have bidden them, as the song says "bind their hair with bands of rosy hue, and tie up their sleeves with ribbons rare, and lace their boddice blue," and Lubin, happily, is not far away, but close at hand, and very pretty couples they make with their yellow hair tied in two ribboned tails behind. Mingling with the throng too, I see some soldiers I have been anxious, for many a long year, to be on visual terms with,—soldiers clad all in sable, with nodding black plumes, bugle ornaments to their uniforms, and death's-heads and cross-bones on their shakoes. These are the renowned Black Brunswickers; and I am strangely reminded, looking at them, of him that Sate in the windowed niche of the high hall, alone, cheerless, brooding, thinking only of the bloody bier of his father, and of revenge:—

of that valiant chieftain of the Black Brunswickers who left the Duchess of Richmond's ball to die at Quatre Bras.

I wish the Germans wouldn't call Brunswick Braunschweig; it destroys the illusion. I can't think of the illustrious house that has given a dynasty to the British throne as the House of Braunschweig. It is as cacaphonous as the house of Physic-bottles, instead of the house of Medici would sound; but our Teuton friends seem to have a genius for uglifying high-sounding names. They call Elsinore (Hamlet's Elsinore) Helsingborg; Vienna, Wien; Munich, München; Cologne, Köln, and the Crimea, Krim. Can there be anything noble, proper to a blood-stained battle-field in the word Krim?

The Frenchman, who was a fool, left us at the Prussian fortress town of Magdebourg, where also the Englishman (who was anything but a fool, a thorough man of the world, in fact, and of whom I intend you to hear further in the course of these travels) also bade me adieu at this station. Then I was left alone in my glory to ponder over the historical places I had been hurried through since six o'clock that morning; I thought of Dusseldorf, and Overbeck the painter, of the battle of Minden, and the Duke of Cumberland and Lord George Sackville; of Hanover, George the First and his bad oysters; of Magdebourg and Baron Trenck, till I went to sleep, and waking found myself at Potsdam.

I found that I had another travelling companion here in the person of a magnificent incarnation, all ringletted, oiled, scented, dress-coated, and watered-silk-faced, braided, frogged, ringed, jewelled, patent-leathered, amber-headed sticked, and straw-coloured kid-gloved, who had travelled in the same train, indeed, from Cologne, but had been driven out of the adjoining carriage, he said by the execrable fumes of the German cigars, and now was good enough to tolerate me, owing to a mild and undeniably Havannah cigar I lighted. This magnificent incarnation shone like a meteor in the narrow carriage. The lamp mirrored itself in his glistening equipment; his gloves and boots fitted so tightly, that you felt inclined to think that he had varnished his hands straw-colour, and his feet black. There was not a crease in his fine linen, a speck of dust on his superfine Saxony sables, his moustachioes and glossy ringlets. I felt ashamed, embaled as I was in rugs and spatterdashes, and a fur cap, and a courier's pouch, all dusty and travel-stained, when I contemplated this bandbox voyageur, so spruce and kempt, the only sign of whose being away from home, was a magnificent mantle lined with expensive furs, on the seat beside him, and who yet, he told me, had been travelling incessantly for six days. He talked with incessant volubility in the French and English tongues; the former seemed to be his native one; he knew everybody and everything I knew, and a great many things and people I didn't know. He seemed intimately acquainted with every musical instrument and musician from the piper that played before Moses to the Messrs. Distin and their Saxhorns. I began to fancy as he proceeded, that he must be that renowned and eccentric horn-player and mystificateur, who travels about Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and other parts of the world, accompanied by a white game cock, and who was once mistaken for a magician by the Greeks of Syra through his marvellous feat of blowing soap-bubbles with tobacco smoke inside them. I was in error, however. I learnt the wondrous creature's name before I reached Berlin; but although he refrained from binding me to secrecy, this is not the time nor place in which to reveal it.

Ten thirty p.m., a wild sweep through a sandy plain thinly starred with lights; then thickening masses of human habitations; then brighter coruscations of gas-lamps, and —Berlin. Here I am received with all the honours of war. Two grim guards with gleaming bayonets impress me, if they do not awe me, on the platform as the carriage-door is flung open; and a very tall and fierce police officer in a helmet demands my passport. I observe that the continental governments always keep the policemen with the longest moustachioes, the largest bodies, and the most ferocious general aspect, at the frontier towns and railway termini. You always see the élite of the municipal force, the prize policemen, when you enter a foreign country, and those in power have a decided eye to effect. Behold me here, exactly half way in my expedition Due North—which is not due north by-the-by, but rather north-east.

Behold me, come post-haste to Berlin, and half my journey due north accomplished. Now, when the northern end looms in sight, I find myself brought to a standstill. This is the twenty-seventh of April, and the flowers in England must be looking out their summer suits, yet here I am literally frozen-up. It was my design, on quitting London, to proceed, viâ Berlin, to Stettin in Pomerania, and there to take the first steamer to St. Petersburgh. Here is my fare, sixty-two dollars in greasy Prussian notes—like curl-papers smoothed out—here is my Foreign-Office passport, not visé yet for Russia, but which to-morrow will be; here are my brains and my heart, bounding, yearning, for Muscovite impressions; and there, at Stettin-on-the-Oder is the Post-Dampfschiff Preussischer-Adler, or Fast Mail-packet Prussian Eagle. What prevents the combination of these things carrying me right away to Cronstadt? What but my being frozen up? What but the ice in the Gulf of Finland?

In a murky office in Mark Lane, London, where I first made my inquiries into Muscovite matters, the clerks spoke hopefully of

the northern navigation being perfectly free by the end of April. In Brussels, weather-wise men bound Russia-wards, were quite sanguine as to the first day of May being first open water. But in Berlin, people began to shake their heads, and whisper ugly stories about the ice; and many advised me to take a run down to Leipzig and Dresden, and see the Saxon Switzerland; telling me significantly that I would have ample time to explore all central Germany before the northern waters were ruffled by the keel even of a cock-boat. There was a little band of Britons purposing for Petersburg at the table d'hôte of the Hôtel de Russie, at Berlin, of whom I had the advantage to make one; and we fed ourselves from day to day (after dinner) with fallacious hopes of early steamers. A Roman citizen in a buff waistcoat, and extensively interested in tallow (so at least it was whispered, though the Fumden Blad said merely Shortsix, Kaufmann aus England, and was silent as to his speciality) was perfectly certain that a steamboat would start from Stockholm for Cronstadt on the fourth of May, and he expressed his determination to secure a passage by her; but as Sweden happens to be on the other side of the Baltic, and there was no bridge, and no water communication yet opened therewith, the Stockholm steamer was a thing to be looked at (in lithography, framed and glazed in the hall of the hotel) and longed for, rather than embarked in. We were all of us perpetually haunted by a sort of phantom steamer—a very flying Russian—commanded, I presume, by Captain Vanderdeckenovitch, whose departure some one had seen advertised in an unknown newspaper. This spectral craft was reported to have left Hull some time since—we all agreed that the passage money out was nine guineas, inclusive of provisions of the very best quality, but exclusive of wines, liquors, and the steward's fee, and she was to call (after doubling the cape, I presume) at Kiel, Lubeck, Copenhagen, Konigsberg; Jerusalem, Madagascar, and North and South Amerikee, for aught I know. To find this ghostly bark, an impetuous Englishman—a north countryman with a head so fiery in hue that they might have put him on a post and made a lighthouse of him, and pendant whiskers like carriage rugs, started off by the midnight mail to Hamburg. He came back in three days and a towering rage, saying that there was ice even in the Elbe, and giving us to understand that the free cities of Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen, had concurred in laughing him to scorn at the bare mention of a steamer due north—yet awhile at least. By degrees a grim certainty broke upon us, and settled itself convincingly in our minds. To the complexion of the Preussischer-Adler we must come; and that Post-Dampfschiff would start from Stettin on Saturday, the seventeenth of May at noon, and not one day or hour before.

I thought the three long weeks would never have come to an end. I might, had I been differently situated, have taken my fill of enjoyment in Berlin, and spent three pleasant weeks there. Unter den Linden, the Thier-Garten, Charlottenbourg, Potsdam, Krotts, the Tonhalle, Sans Souci and Monbijou (pronounced Zang-Zouzy and Mongpichow), are quite sufficient to make a man delectably comfortable on the spree: to say nothing of the art treasure-stored Museum, Rauch's statue of the Great Frederic, Kiss's Amazon, and the sumptuous Opera-haus, with Johanna Wagner in the Tannhaüser, and Marie Taglioni in Satanella. But they were all caviare to the million of Prussian blue devils which possessed me. I felt that I had no business in Berlin—that I had no right to applaud Fraulein Wagner—that I ought to reserve my kidglove reverberations for Mademoiselle Bagdanoff: that every walk I took Unter den Linden was so many paces robbed from the Nevsky Perspective, and that every sight I took at the King of Prussia and the Princes of the House of Hohenzollern was a fraud on my liege literary masters, the Emperor of Russia and the scions of the house of Romanoff.

Conscience-stricken as I felt, though void of guilt, I had my consolations—few and spare, but grateful as Esmeralda's cup to the thirst-tortured Quasimodo. I heard the Oberon of Karl Maria von Weber performed with such a fervour and solemnity of sincerity, listened to with such rapt attention and reverent love—drunk up by a thousand greedy ears, bar by bar, note by note—from the first delicious horn-murmur in the overture to the last crash in the triumphant march, that I began at last to fancy that I was in a cathedral instead of a theatre, and half-expected the people to kneel when the bell rang for the fall of the curtain, and the brilliant lamps grew pale. An extra gleam of consolation was imparted to me, too, when I read in the Schauspiel-zettel the printed avowal that the libretto of the opera had been into High Dutch rendered from the English of the Herr-Poem-Konstruktor J. R. Planché. Again; I saw the Faust of Wolfgang von Goëthe—the Faust as a tragedy, in all its magnificent and majestic simplicity. I don't think I clearly comprehended fifty phrases of the dialogue; I could scarcely read the names of the dramatis personæ in the play-bill; and yet I would not have missed that performance for a pile of ducats; nor shall I ever forget the actor who played Mephistopheles. His name is a shadow to me now; the biting wit, the searching philosophy, the scathing satire in his speech were well nigh Greek to me; but the hood, the gait, the gestures, the devil's grin, the vibrating voice, the red cock's feather, the long peaked shoes, the sardonically up-turned moustache, will never be erased from my mind, and will

stand me in good stead for commentaries when (in the week of the three Thursdays, I suppose) I take heart of grace and sit down to study the giant of Weimar's masterpiece in the original. There was a pretty, blue-eyed, rosy-lipped Marguérite, whose hair had a golden sheen perfectly wondrous; and Faust would have been a senseless stock not to have fallen in love with her; but, alas! she was too fat, and looked as if she ate too much; and when she wept for Faust gave me far more the impression that she was crying because, like the ebony patriarch Tucker, familiarly hight Dan, she was too late for her supper. Still, I came away from Faust almost happy.

There might, perchance, at other times be a surly pleasure in the discovery that Berlin gloves are apparently unknown at Berlin—even as there are no French rolls in Paris—and that Berlin wool is very little sought after. There might have been some advantage gained to science by an attempt to analyse the peculiar smell of the capital of Prussia, which, to uninitiated noses, seems compounded of volatile essence of Cologne (not the eau, but the streets thereof) multiplied by sewer, plus cesspool, plus Grande Rue de Pera, plus Rue de la Tixeranderie after a shower of rain, plus port of Marseilles at any time, plus London eating-house, plus Vauxhall bone-boiling establishment, plus tallow factory, plus low lodging-house in Whitechapel, plus dissecting-rooms, plus the "gruel thick and slab" of Macbeth's witches when it began to cool. There might have been a temporary relief in expatiating on the geological curiosities of Berlin, the foot-lacerating pavement, and the Sahara-like sandy plain in which the city is situate. There might have been a temporary excitement, disagreeable but salubrious, in losing, as I did, half my store of Prussian notes in a cab, and cooling my heels for three successive days at the Police Præsidium in frantically-fruitless inquiries (in very scanty German) after my departed treasure—but there wasn't; no, not one atom. Though the Hôtel de Russie boasted as savoury a table-d'hôte as one would wish to find, likewise Rhine wine exhilarating to the palate and soothing to the soul, I began to loathe my food and drink. I longed for Russian caviare and Russian vodki. I came abroad to eat candles and drink train-oil—or, at least, the equivalent for that which is popularly supposed to form the favourite food of our late enemies—and not to feast on Bisque soup and suprême de volaille. Three weeks! they seemed an eternity.

The maestro whom I met at Potsdam, went back to Cologne cheerfully; he was not bound for the land of the Russ; and, having accomplished the object of his mission—which I imagine to have been the engagement of a few hundred fiddlers—departed in a droschky, his straw-coloured kids gleaming in the sunshine, and wishing me joy of my journey to St. Petersburg. Shall I ever get there, I wonder? The Englishman who was a man of the world didn't come back. He of the red head (Mr. Eddystone I christened him from his beacon-like hair) took rail for Königsberg, to see if there was anything in the steam-vessel line to be done there, and the buff waistcoat, who was commercially interested in tallow, boldly announced his determination not to stand it any longer, but to be off to St. Petersburg overland.

Overland! and why could not I also go overland? The railway, I reasoned, will thence, as far as this same Königsberg, and taking me by way of Tilsit, Tauroggen, Mittau, Riga, and Lake Tschudi, I can reach the much-desired Petropolis. There is the malle-poste or diligence; there is the extra-post; there is the private kibitka, which I can purchase, or hire, and horse at my own charges from stage to stage. The journey ought to occupy ABOUT six days. ABOUT! but a wary and bronzed queen's messenger, who converses with me (he ought to know something, for he is on the half-pay of the dragoons, is a lord's nephew, spent fifty thousand pounds before he was five-and-twenty, and is now ceaselessly wandering up and down on the face of the earth with a red despatch-box, six hundred a-year, and his expenses paid)—the queen's messenger, bronzed and wary, shakes his head ominously. When the winter breaks up in Russia, he remarks, the roads break up too, and the travellers break down. He has often been overland himself (where hasn't he been?) perforce in winter; and he has such marrow-freezing stories to tell (all in a cool, jaunty, mess-room-softened-by-experience manner), of incessant travelling by day and night, of roads made up of morasses, sand-hills, and deep gullies, of drunken drivers, of infamous post-houses swarming with all the plagues of Egypt, naturalised Russian subjects; of atrociously extortionate Jew postmasters; of horses—rum ones to look at, and rummer, or worse ones, to go; of frequent stoppages for hours together; of an absolute dearth of anything wholesome to eat or drink, save bread and tea. He enlarges so much on the bruisings, bumpings, joltings, and dislocations to which the unfortunate victim of the nominally six, but more frequently twelve days' overland route is subject, that I bid the project avaunt like an ugly phantom, and, laying it in the Baltic Sea, determine to weather out the time as well as I can, till the seventeenth.

I can't stop any longer in Berlin, however, that is certain. So I drive out of the Oraneinberg Gate, and cast myself into a railway carriage, which, in its turn, casts me out at Stettin-on-the-Oder, eighty-four miles distant. And on the banks of that fearsome River Oder I pass May-day. In

the Oder, too, I find the steamer in which, at some far remote period of my existence, I suppose I am to occupy a berth. I find the Preussicher Adler; but woe is me! she has taken to her bed in a graving dock, and is a pitiable sight to see. There being something the matter with her boilers, they have dismasted her, leaving her nothing but clumsy stumps like wooden legs. They are scraping her all over, for some cutaneous disorder with which she is afflicted, I presume; and they are re-coppering her bottom, —an operation which German shipwrights appear to me to perform with gum-arabic, dutch metal, and a camel's-hair pencil. Altogether the Prussian Eagle looks such a woe-begone, moulting, tailless, broken-beaked bird, and so very unlike going to Cronstadt, that I flee from her in dismay; and boarding the Geyser, which is trim, taut, and double-funneled, steam swiftly through the Haf See to Swinemunde, and then across the East Sea to Copenhagen.

Plenty of time (miserere me) to see all that is to be seen in the chief city of Denmark; to take the English company's railway to Roeskilde; to cross over to Malmoë in Sweden; to go back to Stettin—to the devil, I think, if this lasts much longer. There is a horrible persuasion forcing itself upon me now—that I live in Berlin; that my goal is there. Back to Berlin I go. Letters are waiting for me. People I didn't know from Adam a month ago, and don't care a silbergroschen for offer to kiss me on both cheeks, and welcome me home. I suppose by this time I am a Prussian subject, and shall have to serve in the landwehr. Between that and blowing one's brains out there is not much difference.

I go back to Stettin, where I have a touch of the overland longing again (it is now the tenth of May), and a Jewish gentleman with an apple-green gabardine, lined with cat-skin, and a beard so ragged and torn, that I am led to surmise that he has himself despoiled the cats of their furry robes, and has suffered severely in the contest, is exceedingly anxious (he nosed me in the hotel lobby as an Englishman, within an hour of my arrival), that I should purchase a kibitka he has to sell. He only wants fifty thalers for it: it is a splendid kibitka, he says:—"sehr hübsch, schrecklich! wunderschön"—so I go to look at it; for I feel just in the sort of mood to buy a kibitka, or an elephant, a diving-bell, a mangle, an organ with an insane monkey to grind it, and throw myself into the Oder immediately afterwards. I look at the kibitka, which I am to horse from stage to stage, and I deserve to be horsed myself if I buy it, so lamentable an old shandrydan is it. I quarrel with the Jew in the cat-skins on the subject, who calls me lord, and sheds tears. Finding that I am determined not to throw away my thalers on his kibitka, he with the elasticity in commercial transactions common to his nation, proposes that I should become the possessor of a splendid dressing-case with silver mountings; but on my remaining proof against this temptation, as well as against that of a stock of prime Hungarian tobacco, which is to be sold for a mere song, he changes blithely from seller to buyer, and generously offers to purchase at advantageous rates, and for ready money, any portion of my wardrobe I may consider superfluous. He is not in the least offended when I bid him go hang in the English language, and walk away moodily—calling after me in cheerful accents (by the title of Well-Born Great British Sir), that he has a fine English bull-pup to dispose of, dirt cheap.

After this, I have another look at the "Preussicher Adler," which, by this time, has been turned, for coppering purposes, nearly keel upwards, and looks as if she had abandoned herself to despair, as I have. Walk the streets of Stettin I dare not, for I am pursued by the hideous spectre of Thomas Tilder aus Tyrol of whom more anon. Yes, Thomas, in these pages shall you like noxious bat on barn-door, be spread out with nails of type! And, as for Berlin, I am ashamed to show my face there again. The very clerks at the station seem to think it quite time for me to be in Russia, and I am afraid the head waiter at the Hôtel de Russie, took it very ill that I came back last time. Yet I journey there, and back, and there again; and in one of my journeys to Berlin I have my passport made good for Russia. The process is a solemn and intricate one, and merits a few words of notice. There is plenty of time; they are hammering away at the Prussian Eagle's boilers yet. First, with great fear and trembling, I go to the Hotel of the Russian Embassy, which is a tremendous mansion, as big as a castle, under the Linden. I have borne the majority of Foreign Legations abroad with tolerable equanimity; but I am quite overcome here by the grandeur, and the double eagle over the gate, and the vastness of the court-yard, and the odour of a diplomatic dinner, which is being cooked (probably in stew-pans of gold from the Ural mountains); but I am especially awed by a house-porter, or Suisse, of gigantic stature, possibly the largest Suisse that ever human ambassador possessed. He is not exactly like a beadle, nor a drum-major, nor an archbishop (he wears a gold-embroidered alb), nor a Field Marshal, nor Garter King at Arms, nor My Lord on May-day, but is something between all these functionaries in appearance. He has a long gilt-headed pole in his hand, much more like the "mast of some tall Ammiral," than a Christian staff, and when I ask him the way to the passport-office, he magnanimously refrains from ejaculating anything about Fee-fo-Fum, or smelling the blood of an Englishman, and instead of eating me up alive on the spot, or grinding my bones to make his bread, he tells me, in a

deep bass voice, to enter the second door on the left through the court-yard, and mount two pair of stairs. Here, in but a seedy little bureau for so grand a mansion, I find a little round old gentleman in a grey flannel dressing-gown and a skull-cap, who looks more like my uncle Toby than a Russian, offers me snuff from his box (a present from the Czar, perhaps), and courteously desires to know what he can do for me. I explain my errand, upon which the little old gentleman shakes his head with Burleigh-like sagacity, as if granting a visâ to a passport were no light matter, and, securing my papers, begs me to call again at three o'clock the following day. I call again at the appointed time, when it appears that the little old gentleman—or, at least, his diplomatic chiefs—have no orders, as yet, to admit English subjects into Russia; so there are telegraphic messages to be sent to Warsaw, where Count Gortschakoff is, and who most courteously telegraphs back, "By all means;" * and there are papers to be signed, and declarations to be made, and there is the deuce and all to pay. When all these formalities have been satisfactorily gone through, I begin to think it pretty nearly time for the passport to be ready, and ask for it; but the little old gentleman, shaking that head of his with much suavity, suggests to-morrow at a quarter to four. The chief secretary of legation, he says, is at Charlottenbourg, dining with the king, and without his signature the passport is not valid. I call again; but I suppose the secretary must be taking tea with some other member of the royal family, for no passport do I receive, and another appointment is made. This time I see my passport bodily, lying on a table, and by the amount of Russian hieroglyphics and double-eagle stamps covering every available blank space on its surface, it ought surely, to my mind, to be good from Revel to Tobolsk. But it is noch nicht fertig,—not yet ready—the little old gentleman says. He speaks nothing but German—so, at least, he blandly declares; yet I notice that he pricks his ears up sharply, and that his eyes twinkle, when an irate Frenchman, whose errand is the same as mine (only he has been waiting ten days), denounces the Russians, in his native tongue, as a nation de barbares. I begin myself to get exceedingly cross, and impatient to know when I am to have the precious document; whereupon the little old gentleman looks at me curiously, as if he didn't quite understand what I meant, or perhaps as if I didn't quite understand his meaning.

"Where do you live in Berlin?" he asks, suddenly.

I tell him that I am stopping at the Hôtel de Russie, in which with a smile of five hundred diplomatist power, he makes me a bow, and tells me he will have the honour of bringing me the passport this present evening, at six o'clock. I ask if there is any charge for the visâ; but, with another smile that would set a sphynx up in business on the spot, so inscrutable is it, he assures me that the visâ is Gratis, gratis, and bows me out. I go home to dinner, and discourse to Mr. Erenreich on my passport tribulations.

"When he comes this evening," says this worthy landlord, "you had better give him a thaler at once. Otherwise you may perhaps find that he has left the passport at the Legation, and that it is impossible to obtain it before to-morrow."

The little old gentleman is punctual to his appointment, and I no sooner catch sight of him in the darkened salle à manger, than I hasten to slip the necessary note into his hand. He makes me a profusion of bows, and gives me my passport,—gutt nach Russland, as he expresses it. "Gutt nach Russland." When I spread the passport on the table, and recal the little old gentleman's words, I can't help feeling somewhat of a thrill. "Gutt nach Russland"—here are the double eagles, and the paragraphs scrawled in unknown characters, and my name (I presume) in such an etymological disguise that my wisest child, had I one, would despair of recognising his own father in it. Yet the expenditure of three shillings has made me "good for Russia." But yesterday there was a gulf of blood and fire, and the thunder of a thousand guns between England and Russia! the Ultima Thule of St. Petersburg was as inaccessible to an Englishman as Mecca or Japan, and now, lo, a scrap of a stamped paper and a few pieces of gold will carry me through the narrow channel, that, ten months ago, the British government would have given millions to be able to float one gun-boat on.

"Itsch chost von Daler," says the commissionnaire with the umbrella. What he should want a Prussian dollar from me for, or why, indeed, he should exact anything, passes my comprehension. He walked into my bed-room at the Drei Kronen this morning, at a dreadfully early hour with his hat on, and his umbrella (a dull crimson in hue) under his arm. He bade me good morning in a cavalier manner, and informed me that he was the commissionnaire, to which I retorted that he might be the Pope, but that I wanted none of his company. The boots was packing my luggage, and he superintended the process with a serenely patronising air, thinking possibly, that on the principle that "l'œil du maître engraisse le cheval," it is the eye of the commissionnaire that cords

* In that meritorious philo-Russian organ, the Nord, I saw, a few days since, an anecdote, apropos of telegraphic despatches, which, I think, will bear translation. Lord Granville, according to the Nord, had commissioned one Sir Acton to engage a house at Moscow for him. Sir Acton telegraphs to Lord Granville to know whether the terms demanded for the house will suit his lordship, whereupon Lord Granville telegraphs back, "Yes, my dear."

the trunks. Finding me indisposed for conversation (I had taken some genuine Russian caviare for breakfast with a view of acclimatising myself early, and was dreadfully sick), he took himself and umbrella off to another apartment, and the boots expressed his opinion to me (in strict confidence) that he, the commissionnaire, was a spitzbube. This is all he has done for me, and now he has the conscience to come to me and tell me that his charges are "chost von Daler." He is authorised, it appears, by somebody who does not pay the thalers himself, to extort them from other people; and he points, with conscious pride, to some tarnished buttons on his waistcoat on which the Russian eagle is manifest.

Why do I give the commissionnaire the thaler he demands, and to which he has no sort of right? Why do I feel inclined to give two, three dollars, to invite him to partake of schnapps, to cast myself on his neck, and assure him that I love him as a brother? Why, because to-day is Saturday, the seventeenth of May, eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and I am standing on the deck—the quarter deck, ye gods!—of the Preussicher Adler which good pyroscaphe has got her steam up to a maddening extent, and in another hour's time will leave the harbour of Stettin for Cronstadt.

New tail-feathers, new wing-feathers, new beak, new claws, has the Preussicher-Adler. A brave bird. There is nothing the matter with her boilers now, her masts are tapering, her decks snow-white, and I have no doubt that her copper glistens like burnished gold, and that the mermaids in the Baltic will be tempted to purloin little bits of the shining metal to deck their weedy tresses withal. A bran new flag of creamy tinge floats at her stern, and on it is depicted with smart plumage, and beak and claws of gold, an eagle of gigantic dimensions. And this is the last eagle with one head that I shall see on this side Jordan.

Everything seems to be new on board. The saloon is gorgeous in crimson velvet, and mirrors, and mahogany and gold. There are the cleanest of sheets, the rosiest of counterpanes, the most coquettish of chintz curtains to the berths. All the crockery is new. All the knives and forks are new; and though I discover afterwards that they won't cut, they are delightfully shiny. There is a library of new books in a new rosewood case, and there is a new cabinet piano, tuned up to nautical-concert pitch, and whose keys when struck clang as sharply as the tongue of an American steamboat clerk. The stewards, of whom there are a goodly number, are all clad in glossy new uniforms of a fancy naval cut, and look like midshipmen at a Vauxhall masquerade. There is a spacious galley for cooking purposes, full of the brightest cooking utensils; a titillating odour issues therefrom, and there are four cooks, yea four, all in professional white. One has an imperial and gold watch-chain, one is flirting with the stewardess (who is young, pretty, flounced, and wears her hair after the manner of the Empress Eugénie), a third is smoking a paper cigarette (quite the gentleman) while the last, reclining in a grove of stewpans, is studying attentively a handsomely bound book. What can it be? Newton's Principia, Victor Hugo's Contemplations, the Cuisinier Royal, or the Polite Letterwriter? The Preussicher Adler, be it known, like her sister vessel the Vladimir, is an intensely aristocratic boat. Both are commanded by officers respectively of the Prussian (!) and Russian (!!) navies. The fare by the Prussian Eagle is enormously high; nine guineas for a sixty hours' passage. On payment of this exorbitant honorarium she will carry such humble passengers as myself; but the ordinary travellers per Preussicher Adler are princes of the empire, grand dukes, archelectors, general-lieutenants, ambassadors, senators, councillors of state. And as for ladies—tenez!—the best edition of Almack's Revisited is to be found on board a Stettin steamboat. I start at the wrong end of the season to travel with the grandees, however. For this being the commencement of the navigation and of PEACE besides, the Russian aristocracy are all hurrying away from St. Petersburgh as fast as ever they can obtain passports. The Vladimir, they tell me, has all her berths engaged up to the middle of July next, and the Prussian Eagle is in equal demand.

I should perhaps be more unexceptionably satisfied with the Adler's arrangements, if her crew would not persist in wearing moustaches and hessian boots with the tassels cut off. It is not nautical. A boatswain, too, with stripes down his trousers, is to me an anomaly. I must dissent, too, from the system of stowing passengers' luggage per Preussicher Adler. The manner of it appears to be this: a stalwart porter balancing a heavy trunk on his shoulder advances along the plank which leads from the wharf to the ship's side. He advances jauntily, as though he were not unaccustomed to dance a coranto. Arrived at the brink of the abyss, he stops, expectorates, bandies a joke in High Dutch with a compatriot who is mending his trousers in an adjacent barge, and bending slightly, pitches the trunk head foremost into the hold.

There is, I need scarcely say, a tremendous fuss and to-do with papers and policemen before we start, calling over names, verification or legitimitation of passports, as it is called by the Russian consul, et cetera et cetera; but I will say this, in honour of the Preussicher Adler's punctuality, that as the clock strikes noon we cast off from our moorings, and steam away through the narrow

Oder. At Swinemunde I see the last of Prussia; henceforth I must be of Russia and Russian.

A WIFE'S PARDON.

Now that the first wild pang is past and over,
Now I have learn'd to accept it as a truth,
That men love not as women, that the lover
To whom the woman gives herself, her youth,
Her trust, her love, her worship,—in his heart,
Just on the surface,—keeps a spot apart,

Deck'd with gay weeds, and painted flies and flowers,
Bright to the eye, all scentless though they be:
Beneath whose flaunting blooms and shadeless bowers
He can receive as flaunting company;
I can forgive thee, knowing that I hold,
Alone of all, the key of purest gold

That locks the gate beyond, whose golden trellis
Shuts out the common herd and shuts in me,
'Mid nightingales and fountains, where a palace
Hymen hath built, and I alone with thee
Can dwell while both shall live, supreme to reign
The rightful queen of this my fair domain.

So, I forgive thee, husband, yes, I pardon,
I give thee back the love I had withdrawn;
Love—ay, but not the same love, that gay garden
With all its florid flowers, its dance-trod lawn,
Its painted butterflies, a tomb contains
Wherein lie buried Trust's poor cold remains.

BLACK AND BLUE.

Forty years ago, there went out to India, in the good ship Globe, Ensign the Honourable Francis Gay, a younger son of the Right Honourable the Earl of Millflower. The ensign was in his nineteenth year, and was proceeding to join his regiment, which was stationed at Chinsurah.

Lord Millflower, in his heart, hoped that his son would never return: he was so great a disgrace to his family. There was no vice with which this youth was unfamiliar. He had been expelled from no fewer than seven schools. In two instances his offence was theft. His conduct had so preyed upon the mind of Lady Millflower that she lost her reason. At seventeen, he committed several forgeries of his eldest brother's, Lord Larkspeare's name; and he took a similar liberty with the name of his father's steward. But these offences were hushed up. He was also guilty of a deed of violence, for which his life would have been forfeited had the case been tried, instead of compromised; for, in those days, such a deed of violence was a capital offence. His family were in constant fear lest he should be transported as a felon, or hanged at Newgate. It was, therefore, some satisfaction to them when the Honourable Francis consented to hold a commission and join his regiment in India. Lord Millflower's other sons, four in number, were all steady, well-conducted, and rather dull beings, while Francis was remarkably gifted, as well as remarkably vicious. He had both talent and genius, humour and wit; and, much as he had neglected his education, he was well read and well informed for his time of life. In personal appearance, also, the reprobate had the advantage over his brethren. None of them were even good-looking except Francis; who was really very handsome; well proportioned, and tall. His manners, also always frank, were, when he pleased, dignified and courteous, and his bearing peculiarly graceful. What he wanted was feeling, to regulate his passions. Of feeling, he was in his youth, wholly destitute.

Lord Millflower had taken the precaution of writing to the colonel of the regiment his son was about to join, and of at the same time enclosing a sum of money for the purpose of freeing Francis from any pecuniary difficulty. Colonel Role himself had the misfortune to have a very bad boy, and he, therefore, sympathised deeply with the worthy nobleman, and resolved to do all in his power to reform the Honourable Francis.

After a passage of four months, the Globe arrived at Calcutta, and the Honourable Francis Gay proceeded to Chinsurah and joined. For several weeks he conducted himself with (for him) wonderful propriety. It is true that he drank and played at billiards and cards, and sometimes an oath would escape his lips, but he indulged in no excesses. The officers of the regiment, indeed, thought the ensign a great acquisition, for he was not only a very pleasant but an entertaining companion.

But, by degrees, the Honourable Francis fell off; and, ere long, so far from having a friend in the regiment, there was no one who would speak to him. Even the colonel was compelled to forbid him his house. Many, very many acts, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, had been looked over by his seniors; but it was resolved that, on the very next occasion of his transgressing, the honourable ensign should be brought to a court-martial and dismissed the service. This resolve was communicated to the ensign by the colonel, who had become tired of lecturing him.

"The next time you are intoxicated on the parade ground, or the next time you use bad language in the mess-room, or the next time you publicly insult a brother officer, provoking him to quarrel with you, you will forfeit your commission." Being the son of an earl, he was entitled—many colonels think—to every possible chance of redemption. Had he been the son of a commoner, he would, most probably, have been court-marshalled and cashiered for the very first offence.

"Thank you, sir," replied the ensign, with

a low bow; "I will be more cautious in future."

He kept his word. From this time he did his duty extremely well; and, to all outward appearance, was a reformed character. The officers, observing this, generously made advances, with a view to resuming their former relations with him. But the Honourable Francis repulsed their advances. The whole regiment had thought proper to cut him; and he now thought proper to cut the whole regiment.

Several months passed, and during that period the ensign applied himself to Hindoostanee and Persian. He encouraged the natives to come to his bungalow, to talk with him, and by night and by day pursued his studies. The result was, that he soon conversed with perfect ease and accuracy. He now began to live like a native—a Mahommedan; and, except when he had to attend to his regimental duties, he wore the native costume, and abstained from drink entirely. With truth, he might have said with Conrad,

> The grape's gay juice my bosom never cheers;
> I'm more than Moslem when the cup appears.

His food was rice, milk, vegetables, and fruit; the bed upon which he slept was hard and mean; such as the natives use. The whole of his European furniture he sold by auction.

His desire—the desire of a doubtfully reformed reprobate—to convert to Christianity a young Mahommedan girl, astonished all those who became acquainted with this desire. The girl was the daughter of a water-carrier (Bheestie). She was not like the natives of India, but more like those of Africa. She was coal-black, and had thick lips and wavy hair. She was short for her age—fourteen years—but thickset, with powerful limbs. The girl's father told the servants belonging to other officers of the regiment, and the curious whim of Gay's became a topic of conversation.

Jehan, the bheestie's daughter, was a virtuous girl, and Francis Gay had never approached her with a view to undermining her virtue. It was no easy matter to persuade her to change her religion; but, strange to say, he at length succeeded, and Noor Jehan was baptised as Ellen by a missionary who journeyed to Chinsurah for the purpose of performing the ceremony. The sanity or otherwise of the ensign was now very generally discussed in the regiment, and the prevalent opinion was, that he was a lunatic. But, the good colonel was a little angry at the surmise. "Surely," he said, "you do not accuse a man of being a maniac because he has converted an infidel."

The regiment was ordered to march to Cawnpore; whither Ellen and her father also proceeded. Cawnpore was then the chief station in the upper provinces of India. Five thousand troops were quartered there. A regiment of dragoons, a regiment of native cavalry, a regiment of British infantry, and two of native infantry. Besides horse and foot there were companies of artillery, and sappers and miners.

Very shortly after the regiment was settled in Cawnpore, the Honourable Francis Gay paid a visit to the chaplain, and intimated a desire to be married. The chaplain, of course, expressed that he should be most happy, and there and then a day and hour was appointed for the performance of the rite; but, when the Reverend gentleman came to hear who was to be the honourable ensign's bride—the black daughter of a native water-carrier—he could not help remarking:

"I am sorry, Mr. Gay, that I cannot, with sincerity, offer you my congratulations."

To which the ensign responded:

"My good sir, I did not ask them." And retired with a bow.

The chaplain drove to the house of Colonel Role, and told him of the interview which had just taken place between himself and ensign the Honourable Francis Gay. The colonel called upon the young man, and entreated him to reflect. "I *have* reflected, sir," was the ensign's reply. The colonel then went to the general; and the general sent for Mr. Gay to attend at his bungalow. Mr. Gay obeyed the summons, and listened with attention and much calmness to a long and violent speech. When it was ended, however, Mr. Gay, with extreme courtesy, and in the quietest of tones, spoke thus:

"General, you had a right to command my attendance here upon any military matter, but not upon any civil matter. However, I waive that, because I believe your intention to be a good one. You, general, have arrived at the years of discretion—perhaps at something beyond those years. You have, at all events, arrived at a time of life when the tumultuous passion of youth can no longer be pleaded in extenuation of certain follies. Now tell me, general, which of us, think you, sins the most, and sets the worst example to the men, European and native, in this station? I, who wish to marry this good Christian girl—or you, who have in your house——." Mr. Gay then made mention of two very discreditable members of the general's establishment. "This is a question which I shall put to the commander-in-chief, if you abide by your threat to report me to his excellency."

That night, the general and Colonel Role held a consultation. The colonel still doubted the ensign's insanity. It had become a fixed idea in the regiment that Gay was insane. The general caught at this, and a committee of doctors was appointed to examine the ensign. They reported that ensign the Honourable Francis Gay was not only of sound mind, but one of the most intellectual young men in the station; and that he had explained to their entire satisfaction certain conversations which he had frequently held with himself in Chinsurah, at the mess-table.

The wedding day had been put off, in consequence of these proceedings, but the parties now met in the church, which was crowded with officers, including nearly the entire medical staff, who were curious to witness the spectacle. There stood the tall and handsome English aristocrat, and beside him his coal-black bride, dressed in garments of red silk trimmed with yellow and gold tinsel. The ensign acted as the interpreter, and explained to Ellen in Hindoostanee the vows she was required to take. This made the ceremony a very long one. When it was concluded, the bride got into her palanquin and was carried home. The bridegroom mounted his pony, and rode by her side.

Ellen—now the Honourable Mrs. Gay—was a girl of great natural ability, of an excellent disposition and was blessed with an excellent temper. She had, moreover, a very sweet voice. After her marriage she was never seen by any European in Cawnpore, except her husband. It was believed that the ensign saved more than two-thirds of his pay, which Ellen, who had an excellent idea of business, used to lend out in small sums to people in the bazaar at the rate of fifty per cent. per mensem. If she lent a rupee (two shillings), she would get back at the end of the month a rupee and eight annas (three shillings) by way of interest.

A year passed away, and a son and heir was born to the Honourable Francis Gay. The child had light blue eyes exactly like those of his father, but his complexion was quite as black as his mother's. When the child was three months old, it was brought to the church, and publicly christened. Mr. Gay and the pay-sergeant of the company he belonged to, being the god-fathers, and Ellen the godmother. The names given to the infant were Ernest, Augustus, George, Francis, Frederick: such being the names respectively of Lord Millflower's sons. Ernest was the eldest, Augustus the second, George the third, Francis the fourth, and Frederick the fifth and youngest. Not long after the birth of his son, Ensign Gay obtained his promotion to the rank of lieutenant, and received, of course, an increase of pay.

Fever became prevalent, and cholera. Several of the captains and senior lieutenants fell victims; and in less than three years lieutenant Gay got his company (the regiment was now at Meerut), and retired from the army by the sale of his captain's commission. It was supposed that he was worth a great deal of money—a lac of rupees (ten thousand pounds) at the very least. Whither he went, no one knew, and no one cared. One of the servants—whom he discharged previous to leaving the station of Meerut—said he believed that his master had gone either to Affghanistan or to Lahore.

Let us now return to Europe. A few years after Captain Gay had sold out of the army, his eldest brother, Lord Larkspeare, was killed while grouse shooting, by the accidental discharge of his gun; his second brother, Augustus, a captain in the army, was lost in a vessel which was bringing him home from Canada; his third brother, George, died of small pox three days after he had taken his father's second title. Of his son Francis's marriage, Lord Millflower had been informed, and also of the birth of the black child, the Honourable Ernest Augustus George Francis Frederick Gay. Colonel Role had deemed it his duty not to withhold these facts, albeit they were disagreeable to communicate to the noble earl. Lord Millflower begged of Colonel Role to institute an inquiry into the fate of his Francis, and the colonel did so but without success. No clue to his whereabout could be discovered, nor could any one say what had become of him. Under these circumstances it was taken for granted that he was dead. Another five years passed away, and the Earl of Millflower departed this life. He was, of course, succeeded in his titles and estates by his son Frederick.

Now, let us return to Francis. He became a dealer in precious stones, and travelled over the whole of India, under the name of Mustapha Khan, visiting the various native courts. Every tour that he made, occupied him three years. Constantly moving about in the sun had tanned his once fair face; and, neither from his appearance, for he was dressed as a native, nor from his speech, could the natives themselves detect that he was an European. He gave out that his birthplace was Nepaul, where the natives are sometimes born with blue eyes. He bought and sold, and was apparently very happy in his occupation. His wife and son invariably accompanied him in his travels. He had never written to his family since his arrival in India, and had not received letters from any member thereof. India he loved, England he detested, and would not have taken up his father's title if it had been a dukedom. He never approached the abode of an European, and never saw a newspaper. He was not likely, therefore, to hear of the changes that had taken place at home. In the bazaar at Delhi, Captain Gay had a small house, in which were deposited his effects, a few boxes filled with clothes, books, &c., his sword, and the uniform he used formerly to wear. These were under the care of a man-servant—a sweeper. The bulk of his worldly wealth he invariably carried about his person, as many natives of India do.

Ernest Gay was now twelve years of age. He was usually called by his parents Chandee, a word signifying silver. Chandee was clever and cunning, and had a wonderful talent for calculating numbers. In less than a minute, by counting on his fingers, he would tell you the interest due on such sums as three rupees, five annas, and seven pic, for twenty-one days, at forty-one three-fourth per cent.

English he had never heard spoken; and as he had never been taught that language, he did not understand a single word of it. Nor could he read or write Hindoostanee; although he spoke it in all its purity and elegance.

There was about to take place, a marriage in the family of the Rajah of Pulbecala. Mustapha Khan (Francis Gay) journeyed from Delhi to the rajah's court, to exhibit his jewels. He had diamonds, rubies, and emeralds of great price, and some of these he hoped to dispose of to advantage. The rajah, however, had already provided himself with these matters, and therefore confined his purchases to a large cat's-eye ring, for which he paid Mustapha fifty gold mohurs (eighty pounds). On his way back to Delhi, at a place called Kunda Ka Serai, a band of robbers attacked the jewel-merchant. They hacked him to pieces with their swords; but, they spared his wife and the boy. The whole of their treasures were stolen, even the rings from Ellen's ears and fingers, and the gold bangles which Chandee wore upon his arms.

When her senses were restored to her, Ellen, with the assistance of her son, dug a grave in the sand, and buried her butchered husband. The bearers who carried the palankeens ran away as soon as the robbers attacked the party, and were no more seen. Most probably they had some small share of the booty, the value of which the Sirdar estimated at four lacs of rupees (forty thousand pounds). Whatever had been Francis Gay's vices when a youth—and they were great enough in all conscience—he had been a kind and affectionate husband to Ellen, and she most bitterly deplored his loss; violent was the grief of Chandee, who was devotedly fond of his father.

They heaped stones over the grave of the dead man, to mark the spot where he was laid, and, after their own fashion, offered up prayers for the repose of his soul.

The murder having been committed within the dominions of an independent prince, Ellen knew that her wrongs were not likely to be redressed if she complained; and that the British Government would not interfere, unless she made known that her husband was an Englishman. This, she felt would be contrary to the wishes of the dead. Hopeless and helpless, she and her son made the best of their way to Delhi, where, having collected a few debts that were due to them, they established a small shop for the sale of native sweet-meats. They carried on this business for three or four years, when Chandee grew weary of it, and set up in the world as a box-waller, or pedlar. His box contained pens, ink, and paper, needles, pins, knives, scissors, soap, eau de cologne, toothbrushes, matches, and so forth. His customers were the European officers, who gave him the name of Black and Blue, from the colour of his eyes and skin. A box-waller is always a great cheat—as great a rascal as was Autolycus himself; Black and Blue, if the truth must be told, was not an exception to the rule or race. But, no one could grudge him his profits when the cuffs and kicks which were playfully administered to him by the young lieutenants and ensigns are taken into consideration. Black and Blue always took the rough usage of his customers in excellent part; and would generally make some such appeal as this (he had picked up a little English by this time): "Ah, well! I know! You rich white gentlemans—I poor black devil. I pray all day all night that ensign be made leeft'nunt; leeft'nunt, capitaine; capitaine, capitaine-meejor; meejor, kunnull; kunnull, meejor-jinneral; and then God bless your father and mother, and brother and sister; and then, for all that pray, I get so much kick and so many bad words. God make us all—black and white; all equal right up above. You want blacking? Here you are. Very good blacking—quite genuine; only one rupee a bottle. I suppose you not got ready money? Very well, I wait till pay-day come. I very poor man. You my master. Khuda Lord Kuren." The meaning of this expression, with which most natives wind up a speech to an European, signifies, May God make you a lord!

When Black and Blue was no more than five years old, he was playing one morning in his father's compound (enclosure—the land around a bungalow), when a pariah dog rushed in and mangled him very severely. The dog was rabid. Captain Gay called in the doctor of a native cavalry regiment, who lived in the next bungalow, and who cauterised the wounds. The child was bitten on the arms, legs, and chest, and was under the doctor's treatment for upwards of five weeks. On several occasions when he visited his patient, the doctor saw and conversed with Ellen, who was naturally very anxious touching the child's safety. This doctor was one of the number who witnessed the marriage of Ensign Gay, at Cawnpore, and was also present when his offspring was christened.

Shortly after the recovery of the little boy, the doctor had been appointed a presidency surgeon, and had charge of one of the hospitals in Calcutta, where he remained for upwards of twenty years. He was then appointed superintending surgeon of the Meerut division. He had a son at Delhi, a lieutenant in the foot artillery, and occasionally went over (the distance is only forty miles from Meerut) to pay him a visit. On one of these occasions, Black and Blue, who had been sent for, made his appearance with his box, sat down on the carpet cross-legged, and opened out his treasures. There were several young officers in the bungalow, chums of the lieutenant; and, while the bargaining was going on, they began to teaze Black and Blue. One removed his turban with the point of a stick; another, sprinkled him with his eau de cologne; a third touched the tip

of his great toe (he had left his shoes, out of respect, in the verandah) with the lighted end of a cheroot. Black and Blue howled with pain, whereupon the two roared with laughter. The doctor, who was reading a paper, begged of the young men to desist, and, somewhat angrily, expostulated with his son for treating a native so cruelly; for he was touched with poor Black and Blue's appeal: "God make us all. When fire burns black man, black man feels as much pain as white man. In hell, you rich gentlemans sing out just as much as poor box-waller."

"Black and Blue is used to it, governor," said the lieutenant.

"Stuff, Robert!" said the doctor, "I address myself to you, and not to these gentlemen, when I say that I have no patience with such flippant cruelty."

"Sahib," said Black and Blue, looking up at the doctor, "you are very good gentlemans—very kind man, and very handsome. May God make you a lord; may your throne be perpetual, and may your end be peace; but do not be angry with these gentlemen. They play tricks with Black and Blue; but they are no enemies. If enemies, what for send to buy Black and Blue's property? Sir, you greatly oblige Black and Blue if you smile once more on these gentlemans. Sir, do you want any violent- (violate) powder, or one small patent corkiscrew (corkscrew). All men born equal; God's rain wet black man and white man all the same. Devil's fire burn too, both the same." Here he laughed at the lieutenant. "Take one packet of violent-powder. Every one rupee a packet. Well, then, take two for one, twelve. That can't hurt anybody. Less than prime cost. I give you my solemn word. Handsome sir, don't be angry."

The doctor, his attention attracted by those light blue eyes, set in that very black skin stared at Black and Blue for several minutes after he finished the speech above quoted. He had never before seen such a peculiar expression as that on the face of the box-waller. Suddenly he recollected an instance of black skin and light blue eyes; but in that case the boy was half-European, the child of the Honourable Francis Gay.

Black and Blue had occasion to change his position; and, in doing so, exposed the calves of his legs. On one of them was a scar, quite round, and about the size of a shilling.

"Good God!" exclaimed the doctor, who became both surprised and agitated, and allowed the newspaper to fall from his hand.

"What is the matter, governor?" asked the lieutenant.

"Nothing—nothing!" said the doctor, still staring at Black and Blue, whose countenance was no longer strange to him. "How did you come by that mark?" he at length asked, pointing to the scar.

"I don't know, Sahib."

"But did not your parents ever tell you?"

"No, Sahib. Parents used to say that it come of itself."

This was, no doubt, true.

"Have you another mark like that on your right arm—just here?"

The doctor placed his finger on the sleeve of the man's dress.

"Yes. But bigger mark that one. How you know that, Sahib?" He pulled up his sleeve and exhibited a scar the size of half-a-crown.

"And another here—on your hip—and another here, on your ribs?"

"Yes. All them marks got, sir. How you know that, Sahib?"

The doctor was quite satisfied that Black and Blue was no other than his little patient of former years, and consequently the heir to the earldom of Millflower. Could it be possible, he thought, that Captain Gay eventually abandoned his black wife and child! If not, how came it that the boy (now a man of two or three and twenty) should be a miserable pedlar, living in the Bazaar at Delhi? When Black and Blue had sold all that the young officers wanted to buy—when no amount of coaxing and flattering would induce them to take anything more—he was about to take his departure; but, the doctor desired him to stay, and intimated to his son that he wished to have some conversation in private with Black and Blue.

"Where is your father?" the doctor asked.

"He dead, Sahib."

"When did he die?"

"Long time ago—ten or twelve year ago."

"Where did he die?"

"Mans — robber mans — kill him with sword."

"And your mother?"

Black and Blue told the doctor the whole of their history, since the death of Captain Gay, and his statements were substantially true. Black and Blue, however, declared most positively that his father was a native, and no European.

"Do you think," the doctor inquired, "that your mother would see me, if I went down to her home?"

"O yes—why not? Come along, Sahib. I will show where she live. You call for palankeen and get on. I run alongside."

The doctor's curiosity was very strong, and he could not resist the desire to satisfy it at once. He accepted Black and Blue's invitation, and went to the house occupied by Ellen. Habited as a native, she was sitting on a coarse mat, smoking, and at the same time mending an old garment of her son's.

The doctor recognised Ellen, immediately; albeit she was now aged. But, at first she did not recognise him. He was altered very much in appearance. His hair and whiskers had become very grey, and he no longer wore a moustache.

Ellen parried all the questions that were put to her, and affected to be as much surprised by them as by the doctor's visit. The statement of her son she supported, that her husband was a native of India.

"O, but surely," said the doctor, "this was the boy whom I attended at Meerut, many years ago, when you and your Sahib were living near the Begum's bridge?"

The poor woman looked at him for a moment, then repeated his name, and burst into tears. Her recollections crowded before her too thickly to admit of her dissembling any further with her visitor; and she admitted that she was the widow of Captain Gay of Her Majesty's — regiment of foot.

The doctor was under no promise to Ellen to keep his discovery secret; and, feeling at liberty to speak of it, did so, publicly, as well as in private. The peerages were looked into, and Black and Blue's pedigree examined. There were the names of all the late lord's sons, and sure enough there was Francis's name above that of Frederick's, the present earl; opposite to the name of Francis, were the letters signifying, "died unmarried." Black and Blue, of course, became an object of great curiosity. His right to a title did not induce him to alter his prices in any way, and hence, he was kicked and cuffed, and abused as much as ever, by the young lieutenants and ensigns, who, by-the-by, always addressed him as "my lord," and "your lordship."

"Pomatum, my lord? Pomatum, did you say? Yes? But let me smell it. O! your lordship calls this pomatum? I call it hog's-lard washed in sandalwood-water. How much? One rupee! O, you villainous peer of the realm! are you not ashamed of yourself?"

Another would thus address him:

"Look here, Lord Black and Blue. Why don't you go home and upset your uncle? Turn him out of his title and estates—eh? You would be sure to marry some beautiful girl."

To this Black and Blue would respond:

"What do I want with title and beautiful gal? This is my home, and I got good business, good many friends, and two or three very beautiful gal?"

"Where, Black and Blue?"

"Ah! that is my business."

"Well, what will you sell your title for?"

"Well, what you offer?"

"One hundred rupees." (£10.)

"Say one hundred and twenty-five."

"No."

"Well, take it—there! Give money and I give receipt. You write it out—I sign it. Sold one title to Ensign Matheson for a hundred rupees."

"But there are two titles, you ass; one an earldom, and the other a viscounty."

"Well, you take the two — give two-hundred rupees for both."

"No. The one I have already bought is the biggest and of the best quality; the other is the small one, and of inferior quality."

"Well, I make reduction in price—take one with the other—and give me one hundred and seventy-five rupees. That can't hurt anybody that wants a title."

Would any of these lads, who had nothing in the world beyond their pay, have consented to an union between Black and Blue, and one of their sisters, after he had come into what were his rights? No! Would the poorest and most unprincipled officers—civil and military—in the whole of India? No! Would any European girl of respectability, who had lived in India—to say nothing of the daughters of gentlemen and ladies—have wedded the black heir to the title and estates of the Earl of Millflower? No. Not in India could his sable lordship have found a virtuous white woman to accept his hand!

In due course the story of Black and Blue's birth crept into the columns of one of the Calcutta newspapers, and, ere long, an attorney of the Supreme Court paid a visit to the imperial city, and had an interview with Black and Blue. He proposed to the box-waller to take him to England, and establish his claim to the estates, which he truthfully represented as worth more than half a million sterling — fifty lacs of rupees. He, the attorney, would pay all expenses of the suit, and, in the event of success, which was certain, would receive only five per cent. or fifty thousand pounds, leaving Black and Blue a balance of forty-five lacs.

Black and Blue, who loved and adored money, on hearing such a sum spoken of, rolled his blue eyes and red tongue, and almost fainted. But, then, to cross the black water!—as the natives call the ocean—that thought made him shudder and shake his head.

The attorney represented to him that he should live in great comfort during the voyage; that the best cabin in the ship should be taken for him; that he should have servants about him; and drawing forth a number of prints of English beauties, he exhibited them to the gaze of Black and Blue.

Black and Blue said he would consult his European friends. He did so, and many of those friends dissuaded him from going to England. Not that they had any doubt as to the issue of his claim, if it should be disputed; but upon the reasonable ground that he was very happy where he was. Others advised him to go by all means, and take up his title, and the wealth that pertained to it. His mother entreated him not to leave her. But, in the end, the voice of the attorney prevailed, and Black and Blue declared himself ready to accompany him.

Ten thousand rupees (one thousand pounds) were given to Ellen for her support during

the temporary absence of her son, who was to return as soon as he had realised his forty-five lacs (four hundred and fifty thousand pounds). It was said that a mercantile firm in Calcutta, in which an illustrious native gentleman was a partner, advanced the means required for the purpose of establishing the black man's right to the earldom.

The attorney possessed himself of the proofs. He had the papers of the Honourable Francis Gay, amongst which were letters from the late Lord Millflower to his eldest brother, Lord Larkspeare. He also, in the presence of credible witnesses, received from the hands of Ellen, the dead man's uniform; secondly, he had the deposition on oath of the superintending surgeon, and of several other officers who were cognisant of every particular. Many gave these depositions with reluctance, but felt bound to speak the truth when interrogated. In a word, the attorney got his case up remarkably well.

Black and Blue and the attorney left Calcutta in one of the large passenger ships, and in the month of April landed at Gravesend, whence they journeyed to London. Here, Black and Blue was prevailed upon to wear Christian clothes. In his snow-white muslin dress, his pink turban, and his red slippers covered with gold embroidery, Black and Blue had looked an aristocratic native, notwithstanding he was so very black. [Colour is no criterion of high caste, or rank in India. The late Maharajah Rooder Singh, of Darbungah, whose family—to borrow a phrase from Burke's Peerage—is one of stupendous antiquity, had the complexion of an African; while his younger brother, Basdeo, who now sits on the throne, is far fairer than his Highness the Maharajah Dulleep Singh.] But, in his black trowsers, black waistcoat, black surtout coat, white neckcloth, black beaver hat, and Wellington boots, poor Black and Blue looked truly hideous: while his slouching Indian gait would have led most people to conclude that he was intoxicated. Poor Black and Blue had never tasted anything stronger than water in the whole course of his life.

The attorney had an interview with Frederick, the Earl of Millflower. He wrote to the firm in Calcutta to that effect, and he further stated that the Earl had set him at defiance, and that he was about to institute the suit in the proper court.

This was the last that was ever heard in India of Black and Blue, or of the attorney. Inquiries were instituted, but with no avail. There were many conjectures; the one most generally entertained was, that poor Black and Blue, and his undoubted claim, were disposed of by the attorney for a sum which satisfied him, and that Black and Blue was secretly led into indulgences in some foreign country, and died of their effects. But his mother, who is still living, will not believe that he is dead, and feels convinced that some day or other he will turn up and be restored to her.

"What on earth became of that black earl?" is a question very often put by many who were acquainted with his strange history.

OUR IRON CONSTITUTION.

A good deal has been said, and a good deal more has yet to be said, as to the condition of Britannia. It is certain that she has a disease or two against which she scarcely could make head (as she has done for years past) were she not blessed with an iron constitution. She has an iron brain that works exactly like a steam-engine; the breath of her nostrils is the blowing off, or rather the turning on, of steam. The breath of her lungs is the blast of the furnace; into her fiery mouth is poured the iron ore, as fast as it is to be brought out of the mine, which is Britannia's pantry. She not only digests this food easily, but converts it into living substance. Her fist is the steam-hammer; her arteries—which ramifying, interlacing, run in all directions from the heart, called London—have an iron lining, and, with rapid even beat, there rushes along each, an iron torrent. Of iron are the tools which make the country rich in peace—the ploughshare and the spade; with iron she multiplies, ten thousand-fold, by her machinery, the strength of her hands. We cook our food in iron vessels, over iron ranges. Of iron are the weapons that have made us powerful in war—the sword, the shell, the cannon. With iron we span gulfs of the great sea; of iron we are building ships like towns, to ride upon the deep. Girdling the world with iron, we make of the dead metal a quick and subtle messenger. Of iron, too, we are now beginning to construct luxurious palaces and houses. Success in arts and arms, as all the world acknowledges, iron begets rather than gold; for, little service could gold buy, if there were no iron to render it. They say that there is in ordinary human blood a trace of iron, to which it owes the richness of its colour and the vigour it gives to the frame. Into the weak body our physicians pour iron as medicine, and often, as administered by them, it brings strength to the limbs and colour to the cheek. The present strength of Britain, we may very reasonably say, is due to the fact that this fortunate country has more iron in its blood than any other.

Speaking humanly, the founder of the iron constitution of Britannia was Henry Cort, of Gosport, in the County of Southampton. Before Henry Cort's time, we had little or no wrought iron of our own, and what we used we bought of Sweden or of Russia. Having no forests from which to draw wood-charcoal in plenty, we were content, perforce, to get crude iron from our ore, and ask the foreigner for the wrought metal, which alone

is fit for service. Henry Cort made us masters of ourselves in this respect, by the invention of two processes, for which he took out patents seventy-two years ago. His first invention is known as the puddling furnace, wherein, since its discovery until this day, wrought iron has been manufactured chiefly by the flame of pit-coal. The second invention was a system of grooved rollers, through which the iron was passed after it had been wrought in the puddling furnace, and by which the manufacturer was enabled to produce twenty tons of bar-iron, in the time and with the labour previously required to manipulate one ton of inferior quality, by the tedious operation of forging under the hammer.

That a Henry Cort, of Gosport, was the author of this system of working iron which has prevailed among us since his time, never was questioned; and the affirmation is now strengthened by the testimony of the most eminent iron-masters and engineers. It is also certain that this system has been of an advantage to this country that leads to extravagant results when we attempt, however soberly, to calculate it. Seventy years ago the use of iron was what, in comparison with the use made of it in later days, may be called insignificant; but, even then we paid to Sweden alone for wrought iron, about a million and a half a-year. The great war that followed Cort's inventions sorely tried the British pocket, and it was attended with increased demands for iron. Had we been forced in the war-time to go abroad for it, and buy it at war-prices, it is not easy to say how much greater our financial difficulties would have been. Let us be content to record that sober people have propounded figures which appear to show a gain to this country, by the inventions that enabled us to work up our own iron, equal by this time to one hundred millions. Meanwhile, other inventions, and not a few of the useful arts, have been promoted by the free supply of wrought iron, for which we have to thank the happy wit of Henry Cort—who spent, let us add, not only wit on his researches, but a private fortune of some twenty thousand pounds.

Surely a discovery of such importance, made at such cost, must have brought to its author fame and wealth as his reward! Mr. Cort patented the processes which would certainly be used by every man concerned in the trade they were so vastly to extend; and he made terms with the chief iron-masters, who signed contracts to pay him ten shillings a ton for the use of his discoveries. In the simple and just course of things, a great reward was on the point of following a greater service to the country. But, this country has a government which is a kind of torpedo in its dealings with ingenious people. Clever men who take patents out, because in doing so they are obliged to put their hands into the water occupied by this torpedo, suffer benumbing shocks, which vary in severity according to the closeness of the contact. Passive injustice, wrong by indifference to right, is now supposed to be the power that can strike strong arms with palsy, or faint hearts with death. Seventy years ago, injustice on the part of men in power was not passive only; wrong often was done in actual defiance of right. Mr. Cort having taken out his patents, they were, for a mysterious reason, seized by the Treasurer of the Navy, who was at the same time Secretary at War, and who, helped by the perjury of a confidential deputy, seized also the victim's freeholds at Foutley, Fareham, and Gosport, valued, with the stock and goodwill of a lucrative trade, at thirty-nine thousand pounds, and caused them to be handed over to the son of a public defaulter in the Navy Office!

To an incident like this, of course there belong secret passages; but, to whose discredit any more disclosure would have been, we may judge clearly enough from two facts. One of them is, that before Cort died, a ruined man, fifty-six years ago, no account of the proceedings taken against him ever was obtained. The other is, that two or three years after his death, parliament appointed a commission to inquire into charges against the financial department of the Navy, and it then appeared that a few weeks before the sitting of the commission, the Treasurer and his deputy indemnified each other by a joint release, and agreed to burn their accounts for upwards of a million and a half of public money which had passed (or not passed) through their hands. With the accounts, they burnt also all papers having reference to Mr. Cort's case; having done which, they refused to answer questions that would criminate themselves. So, the man who added scores of millions to his country's wealth, died ruined, and bequeathed to his nine children nothing but beggary. A son has now grown old in indigence, his years exceed three-score and ten, and it is only now, at last,—sick, infirm, troubled with care about the means of life,—that he hears some men talking of the justice due to those who bear their father's name. The daughters have a pension.

Ah, then we are not so ungrateful! Something has been done towards making reparation for the wrong done to their house. Yes, something. They receive a pension of nineteen pounds a-year!

In the first place, however, it should be said, that—about ten years after the death of their benefactor—the members of the iron-trade raised a small sum for the relief of his distressed widow and children. Forty-one firms subscribed and paid to Mr. Cort's family a small but decent sum: being about a twentieth part of a farthing in the pound, upon the profit they had made of Mr. Cort's inventions.

That was the benefaction of the trade; but what was the benefaction of the government? Twenty-five pounds six shillings was a pension granted by King George the Fourth's warrant to Cort's daughters as a pension. An arbitrary deduction was, however, made—no doubt, by an economical ministry of George the Fourth's virtuous days—and, for the fifteen years following,—eighteen hundred and sixteen,—the sum actually paid out by the Exchequer was twenty pounds. But, of this sum, a clerk in the Exchequer put one pound a-year into his pocket as his own fee for the trouble he took in transmitting it. In the days of William the Fourth it was righteously ordained that pensions should be made without deduction; new warrants were made out, and the clerk no longer received a pound for paying nineteen pounds to an inventor's daughter. She received her nineteen pounds without any such mean deduction. The subtracted pound was pocketed, not by an Exchequer clerk, but by the British nation. Two of Mr. Cort's daughters survive, and two pounds a-year is the national saving made at their expense by the impartial and dignified economy of our official system.

Now, it is a singular fact, that the awakening of the public to a sense of the ill-usage suffered by the founder of our iron constitution is contemporary with the beginning of another great advance in strength. A new inventor has arisen in these days: seventy years having elapsed since Cort's establishment of the British manufacture of wrought iron, and no improvement having been made during this interval on either of his processes. Valuable as they have proved, they are both complex and troublesome, as we shall show presently, when we explain them at more length; an improvement was in the natural course of things quite due, or even over-due: and it has come during the last month or two in the shape of a process patented by Mr. Bessemer, the publication of which (if it fulfil only one half of the just expectation it has raised) will be probably to this country the most important event of the year 'fifty-six. Mr. Bessemer's process supersedes the puddling furnace. One of the cupels in which he converts cast iron into malleable iron and steel, will produce, he declares, in a day as much malleable iron as fifty puddling furnaces, and that too, with but a hundredth part of the labour. But, while the puddling furnace may be superseded, the grooved roller rises into fresh importance.

Before we proceed any farther, let us endeavour to tell in a sentence or two, how the iron manufacture is at present carried on.

The ore is first made into heaps with coal, and burnt or roasted. Water and carbonic acid are thus driven off, and there is left a porous mass of impure oxide of iron, with all the earthy matter that was not to be volatilised.

To get rid of the oxygen, which makes an oxide of the iron, and to get rid, also, of the earthy matter, are, of course, the two next objects of the manufacturer. Charcoal (carbon), burning at a white heat, has a thirst for oxygen wholly unparalleled. It burns the faster for the oxygen it drinks, becomes the hotter, and increases in its thirst. Lime added to the earthy matters in the roasted iron unites with them at a white heat, causing them to melt and rise in a thick scum. Let, therefore, the roasted ore be burnt in huge furnaces with lime and charcoal, while the entire mass is urged to a white heat by mighty blasts of air; and the glowing charcoal will suck oxygen out of the iron, and reduce this from the state of oxide to a more surely metallic mass. The metal so reduced will sink by its own weight below the scum formed by the union of the earthy matter with the lime. This is the work done in the blast furnaces, from the bottom of which molten iron runs, while the scum, or slag, is drawn off from an upper opening: fresh charcoal, lime, and roasted ore, being continually poured in at the top, to feed the furnace.

We have said that charcoal is used in this process of reduction. It is used only where it can be got in quantity sufficient, and, as it is the parent form of carbon, where it can be used much trouble is spared in later processes. It is because our power of using charcoal, is, in this country, very limited, that we were obliged to look to Sweden and to Russia for good working iron, before Cort taught us how to make coke serve our turn. But, even now for certain qualities of iron, as for that which is made into wire, we are obliged commonly to go to Sweden.

We use coke then, and not charcoal, in our blast furnaces; the coke, of course, containing mineral impurities, many defects occur in the iron, which runs in a molten stream out of the bottom of the furnace. It runs along channels of sand on the floor of the furnace-house into rough moulds, wherein it cools down into masses of the metal which, as it now stands, contains in small proportions a variety of foreign matters—silicon, sulphur, phosphorus, with traces of aluminum, calcium, and potassium. This is pig-iron.

The pig (or cast) iron is little fit for use. To make it valuable in the arts, it must be made malleable, and almost, or quite, converted into steel. To convert pig-iron into steel, it is requisite to get rid of as much impurity as possible, and to reduce the quantity of carbon it contains. A main difference between iron and steel is, that the steel contains less carbon.

Our narrative will be the clearer, if we say, at once, that Mr. Bessemer proposes to do, by a single process, what is done now by the successive steps we are about to count. He does not even go so far with the old process as we have already described. He does

not let the molten metal coming from the blast-furnace cool into pig-iron, and allow the manufacturer to go to the expense of a fresh melting. As it flows white hot from the blast-furnace, he receives the cast metal by a trough, into his cupel, or refining-pot, where he arrests—and shows evidence to prove—that in half-an-hour, and by a single process which one man can conduct, all is done cheaply, easily, and rapidly, that is now done, at considerable cost of time, labour, and money in the manner following :

The impurities in the cast iron are got rid of, as far as possible, by again melting it and exposing it while molten to the action of the air. For, these impurities are all of a kind to unite at a high temperature with the oxygen of which air is in part composed, and the oxygen compounds so formed are either volatile, or easily fusible, and unable to combine with the metallic iron. The carbon left in the iron of course takes the same opportunity of uniting itself with oxygen, burns itself off, and so diminishes its quantity. It was proposed, therefore, that the metal again melted should be exposed as much as possible to contact with the air. This was done, first by the refining, then by puddling. These two processes occasion two separate heatings followed by two more coolings of the metal. In the refinery the metal fused—with charcoal, if a superior result, or charcoal iron, is desired—is brought into contact with air sufficiently to burn off more of its charcoal, and to form a second finer slag, chemically reducible to the ingredients of flint and iron.

Then begins the puddling. The iron again melted on the bed of a reverberatory furnace, is vigorously stirred by hand-labour with a long rod, in order that it may be as much as possible touched by the air. As the carbon is burnt off by absorption of the oxygen, the whole mass ceasing to be fluid, becomes dense and spongy. Then the puddler, standing almost naked at the furnace, collects on the end of his rod as much of the thick iron paste as he can lift, and, swinging it through the air, places it under a forge-hammer, by which it is crushed and kneaded as it cools before passing along the grooves of the roller, within which it is finally drawn out and compressed. The iron passed through a broad groove, has sometimes to be again heated before it will pass through another that is narrower. In the course of purifying, beating, rolling, cutting, and welding, the best iron has to be heated six times over, at great cost of fuel, time, and toil. By this new process it is not to cool once, till the manufacture is complete. There is a great saving of fuel, and the smallest possible expense of time and labour.

In the very brief sketch that has here been given, the reader may have observed the laborious nature of the puddling process, and the somewhat clumsy method of exposing liquid metal to the air by causing it to be stirred up with a long pole. Mr. James Nasmyth suggested that strong jets of steam, forced into the liquid metal from below (care being taken that it was in full rush before the metal entered), would throw the whole mass into agitation, and be an efficient substitute, so far as stirring went, for the rod of the puddler. Steam would do nothing more than reduce the temperature of the metal. Nobody has been more prompt than Mr. Nasmyth to declare that quite another principle is involved, and a far happier suggestion made, when Mr. Bessemer says, Don't throw up jets of steam, but jets of cold air. That is the whole gist of Mr. Bessemer's suggestion. In theory and practical result the two ideas are as wide asunder as A from Z, but independent people, if they happen not to reflect or to inquire, are very likely to be of the same mind with the English Government officials, heads of a certain department at Woolwich, who, when Mr. Bessemer made his suggestions known to them some little time ago, pooh-poohed them, and declined taking any benefits therefrom ;—the thing had been tried before, they said, by Mr. Nasmyth. The Emperor of the French, with quicker wit, has already made up his mind to put the new plan to an ample test, by introducing it into the arsenal at Rouelle.

The whole point of Mr. Bessemer's invention lies in the use of an air-blast, not only to stir the iron in the pot, but to refine it. It is no new discovery as to its principle ; it is a most happy adaptation of accepted principles ; a suggestion like almost every suggestion that is of the highest value to the world, marvellous clear and simple, as to which people wonder why it has occurred to nobody before. Possibly it may have been made by others, as is the way also not seldom in such cases ; but it has never until now been made so emphatically the possession of the public as to ensure attention and acceptance, if acceptance it deserve. It first took the public by surprise in a paper read by the patentee at the late meeting of the British Association. In the paper it was explained so distinctly, that there was universal admission of the fact that, as to its theory, the new plan is a sound one. It is declared, however, by a large number of iron-masters, who are not to be startled out of an accepted system, that, for various technical reasons, known to and stated by themselves, the new plan will not work. They may be right ; as we are not without experience in this sort of prediction, we also humbly venture to think that they may be wrong.

Connect with the blast-furnace, says Mr. Bessemer, a large cupola furnace lined with fire-bricks to be the refining-pot; in the bottom of it let there be the openings of pipes through which blasts of air can be forced ; have a tap-hole stopped with loam, through which the metal can be poured out at the fitting time ; and a hole halfway up, by

which, through a trough bringing it from the blast-furnace, the cast iron can pour in a white hot torrent. Establish the blast first, then pour the torrent in. The air leaps up through it, dashes it up and down, and, mingling with the metal, ultimately gives up its oxygen to the carbon, which begins to burn. Flame, mixed with some bright sparks, rises through the furnace-mouth. The combustion is attended with increase of heat, and, the heat being generated in the interior of the mass and dispersed through it in innumerable fiery bubbles, most of it is absorbed by the metal, of which the temperature is thus very greatly raised. In a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, all the carbon that had been mixed only mechanically with the iron is consumed; the temperature of the molten iron has in the mean time risen to so high a point, that the carbon chemically combined with it breaks from its old tie to burst into flame with the oxygen. A sudden increase in the volume of flame rising from the furnace, indicates when this stage of the operation has commenced. The metal now rises above its former level, and a light frothy slag makes its appearance and is thrown out in foamy masses. This eruption lasts five or six minutes and then ceases. A steady and powerful flame now burns, indicating, after the period when impurities could be no longer retained, a constant combustion of the carbon and consequent decrease of its quantity; the heat of the entire mass, for the reason before stated, all the while rising. The temperature is so great that oxide of iron as fast as it forms, fuses, and so forms a solvent of the earths that have to be got rid of; the sulphur is burnt off, and, by the violent ebullition, the whole mass is in this way thoroughly cleansed. The tedious work of the refiner and the puddler is now to be considered done in little more than half-an-hour, by chemical changes, set on foot and maintained simply by blasts of air. The vent-hole being opened, and the metal poured out, it is found, when cool enough to be weighed, to have lost eighteen per cent. where it would have lost twenty-eight per cent. by the old process; it proves also to be more free from cinder and impurity than the old puddle bars; to require very much less subsequent working; and to yield its produce to the roller in large masses, free from sand-crack or flaw.

By the puddling process four or five hundred pounds of metal were all that could be operated upon at one time, and this was treated in portions of seventy or eighty pounds watched over by human labour, painfully manipulated and stamped into form. There is no limit to the size of the homogeneous mass produced by Mr. Bessemer's new method, except the size of the cupel, or refining furnace. In the experiments with which this theory has been demonstrated, m three to five tons of crude iron have passed into the condition of piles of malleable iron, in thirty or five and thirty minutes, and, except the coke used in the first smelting, the metal has been brought into contact with no fuel but the charcoal contained in itself.

Once brought to a white heat, the metal, with the help of the air-blast, can go on alone; and it will go on, as it continues to lose carbon, through the successive stages of ordinary cast steel, hard steel, soft steel, steely iron, and soft iron. The quality of metal obtained will depend, therefore, upon the period at which it is thought proper that the vent-hole of the cupel should be opened. There is one particular quality midway between the qualities of cast steel and soft malleable iron, which Mr. Bessemer calls semi-steel: more tensile, harder, and more elastic than soft iron, at the same time not so brittle or so difficult to work as steel: which he believes will rise into great importance for its lightness, strength, and durability. It will be also the cheapest form of metal known.

The finest qualities of iron which are still imported from abroad, and sold at from twenty to thirty pounds a ton, Mr. Bessemer is firmly assured he can produce, of equal quality, at a cost of two pounds a ton below that of the common English iron.

At present, iron in very large masses, is to be obtained only by welding; and the affinity of hot iron for oxygen is so great, scales form so instantly, that it is most difficult so to weld as to produce perfect union. This is one source of the flaws which destroy the value and sometimes the use of heavy guns and other great works from the foundries. If the new invention answer the hope of its projector, all necessity of welding will be superseded; the best iron may be had in uniform mass—practically speaking, we might say, of any required size.

To fulfil, only in part, expectation of this magnitude, is to effect a vast change for the better in one of the most vital conditions of the progress of this country, and of human civilisation.

Demonstrations by experiment are now being made in London: necessarily somewhat imperfect, because London has no blast-furnaces of any size: but they are made apparently with most complete success. It is objected by practical men that Bessemer's Process does produce very promptly and cheaply, malleable iron—so much it is now impossible to deny—but that it is not fibrous enough to be worth anything. Heads have been shaken on 'change at Birmingham, over a rod of Bessemer iron, rolled, and broken, and it has been pronounced Red Short. On the other hand it is declared that iron produced by the new process at Woolwich, has stood its tests, and proved as fibrous as could be desired for any purpose. Of the difficulties raised by practical men, against the possibility

of getting the required air-blast, we will say nothing. It is all too much like what we have heard a hundred times before, and what we know to have been said among our forefathers whenever any new thing was proposed.

MAD DANCING.

Having, last autumn, too short a holiday to allow of a long tour, I determined to make for the nearest bit of the picturesque: directing my travels to the shores of the beautiful Meuse, a river which may vie with the Neckar, if not with the Rhine, in interesting sites and luxuriant hills and vales. From the pleasant, clean, and cheerful old town of Namur—which I quitted while the whole population was busy staring at a very grand wedding of one of its burghers, the preparations for which had been occupying the indefatigable host of the Hôtel de Harscamp for a week before—I took the steamboat which runs to Dinant, between the narrow but pretty shores of the river. Nothing could have been pleasanter than the voyage, except that the incessant snorting of the engine a little shook my resolution to forget all disturbative thoughts in this my tour. However, the snorting was to some purpose, and I was at length safely landed at the opening of a black gulf, redolent with odours not of the most fascinating: the only means by which the traveller can reach the upper air and the main street of the curious, little, irregular town of Dinant, which rises, with all its rocks and the remains of its castle, close to the river's brink.

I took up my abode at an hotel at the corner of the great square or market-place leading to the bridge, one side of which is occupied by a strange, weird, old church, having an extravagantly-shaped tower of disproportionate height, such as is only to be met with in this part of the world, and the porch of which opens on two sides, and is still pretty, in spite of its defaced ornaments and empty niches. Close at the back of this church—so close that it seems in danger of being crushed at any moment—rise, perpendicularly, enormous cliffs, perched on the highest point of one of which stands the citadel, the winding way to it marking the face of the rock in zig-zags, occasionally more clearly defined by the glittering arms of the climbing soldiers, who toil along in single file to reach their post in the clouds.

Except this citadel, there is nothing left in Dinant to indicate that it was ever a town of vast importance, and of a most warlike character. The houses are built in and out, and without order or regularity; and modern improvement has knocked down most of those which kept their antique aspect. This clearing away has doubtless been salutary; and it is to be desired that the same process were extended to the dirty hole of ascent from the shore, which, at present, gives the traveller a poor opinion of the cleanliness or decency of the Dinantois. However, all in good time; progress is sufficiently apparent in the changes which a few years have made in all the towns along the banks of the charming river, bordered with more wild flowers and in greater variety than I ever beheld elsewhere. A walk by its margin, for as many miles as the pedestrian is capable of, will disclose more beauties of rock, meadow, and stream, than he is likely to find in most expeditions.

After having taken a stroll of this kind towards the rocks of Anseremme, and rested in a flower-filled meadow near the beautiful modern château of Freyr, I returned to my hotel: being ferried across the river by a laughing damsel in a large straw hat, who told me that I was lucky in having come to Dinant in time for the fête, at which she hoped to dance that very evening.

On reaching my inn I was soon made aware that the important eve had arrived, for the wide street leading from the market-place was alive with hilarious mirth, caused by a riotous game—a favourite one in Belgium — in which the object of those engaged is to avoid being soused by the descending waters of a well-filled pail, borne on a tumbrel driven at full speed. Whether there was at any period anything religious in this game I know not; if so, all traces of the anything religious are entirely lost; and an antiquary in search of confirmation of some favourite theory would be baffled—as he would equally be in endeavouring to discover solemnity in the remains of the circular dance once honouring Diana, which these clumsy amusements precede.

As night closed in, the market-place began to glitter with lights, an orchestra was erected in the centre, a band struck up, and dozens of young couples suddenly appeared, who soon almost filled the square, starting rapidly off in rounds, with a perseverance and energy which it seemed impossible to tire, and, at intervals, exciting themselves still more by shouting a chorus at the top of their voices—perhaps a hymn in praise of their Gods—but being in an unintelligible patois, I find it impossible to determine. In the pauses of this headlong movement, the partners walked about arm-in-arm, each keeping the same all the evening. As the darkness increased, the animation became still more fast and furious, the time of the musicians was quicker, and the renewed whirling grew bewildering in its rapidity. After standing for some time amongst the crowd of spectators, I went back to the hotel, where I had not been long when I was aware of a tremendous riot and noise of feet below. On descending to the usual public dining-room, I was astonished to find that it had been taken possession of by an apparently frantic mob of dancers, who had forcibly entered the house, and, without leave, had

established their ball-room here, to the infinite discomfiture of the bustling landlady, who was wringing her hands in despair at the impracticability of serving supper to a party of strangers just arrived. Nothing could be done; the custom of the fête was not to be interfered with; and the distressed mistress of the house was left to lament the want of caution in leaving open the street-door, and to scold the waiters for a neglect which they evidently had not unadvisedly fallen into. Round and round the dining-table did these circling votaries of the tour-making goddess, Diana, go, singing vociferously, and grasping each other's hands, so as to form a strong unbroken chain. Suddenly, when at its height, the noise and tumult ceased, the party rushed out of the still open door of the hotel—which was closed in a moment on them—and it seems directed their steps to another domicile, there to renew their feats. But, as the clock struck the hour of ten, as if by magic every voice was silent, every light was extinguished, and the quiet town of Dinant had returned to its propriety.

As the moon happened to be very bright that night, and I wished to see its effect on the river and the rocks, I accepted the offer of one of the waiters to let me through a series of unoccupied rooms in the hotel to the back, where rose the sheer cliff like a wall, in which steps had been cut leading to terrace gardens hanging along its surface. Here, at the utmost elevation, besides a summer-house covered with grape vine, I found a large cavern half concealed by shrubs. As this retains the name of the Oracle, it was clear to my mind that I was at that moment standing on a spot sacred to the sibyl, where she, hidden in this exalted seclusion, delivered her enigmas to her votaries, who, in the days of her power, danced then, as now, at the foot of the mountain on which her temple was perched. When other rites drove forth the pagan, the priests of the new faith, willing to reform by degrees and humouring the tastes of the people, permitted some part of former religious ceremonies to be retained. In this way it was that for several centuries the dance appeared in a sort of semi-solemn form, as when the abbot led a holy band of priestly attendants with steps in measured cadence up the aisles of his cathedral. By degrees priests gave up this somewhat incongruous privilege to magistrates, on whom it sat with scarcely more gravity when those worthies capered through both streets and halls on great occasions. When such grave personages declined to carry on the custom, the church again came to the rescue, and at many a village wedding or christening, until within comparatively few years, the curé had the right to lead off the ball with the bride or the mother of the infant. It required, in some distant villages, the tornado of the great French revolution to overturn a custom so deeply rooted amongst the peasantry. Now, however, neither abbés nor magistrates interfere except to see that all finishes at ten o'clock.

I remember once, in the Vosges, being witness to a village dance, in which there seemed something of a religious character. It is called Les Faschenottes or Danse des Bures, and takes place on Quadragésime Sunday, after vespers. Near the village church was an open place called La Bure, where, directly after leaving the service, the young men and maidens assembled, but separated into groups; all the girls together, and all the men together.

The two parties then formed a chain and began wheeling round; at every three turns they all together raised a song, the burthen of which was, Whom shall we Marry? The first reply came from the female circle, who, with much clamour, called out the name of one of their number, who was straightway placed in the centre of their circle. Round went both parties again three times, and, pausing at the mystic number, the elected damsel sang out in patois, "I will love him who loves me." The same thing was meantime going on with the men, and, after a youth had been duly elected, the pair were introduced, commanded to embrace, and then were admitted to join the whirling chain. Another and another succeeded, until there being no more couples, the chain was completed, and the round went on till everyone was tired. But the most remarkable part of this dance is, that at a signal each girl receives a torch brought from the church, and quits for a moment the hand of her partner, while she does her part in setting fire to a pile of wood in the middle of the place. After it is lighted they resume their round, and when the fire is nearly extinct, there ensues a scramble for the brands by each couple. Those who succeed in getting one carry it off in triumph to the girl's house; her relations being at their doors watching the ceremony. These couples are generally understood to be engaged, and probably, if there is no wish on the part of the gallant to make the affair serious, he hedges out before the end of the solemnity. Although as clear as possible to the eyes of a learned Theban, what all this is derived from, it is unlikely that the lively pairs who have been exerting themselves so well and long, have reflected on the fact of their being priests and priestesses of the goddess Diana, and that they have been performing a sorcerer's charm; neither do they pause to consider the meaning of their patois word, fashinotte, and twist it back into fascinatis, which tells the whole tale.

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THE MURDERED PERSON.

In an early number of this journal,* we made some reference to the fact that in the highly improving accounts which are given to the public of the last moments of murderers, the murdered person may be usually observed to be entirely dismissed from the moral discourses with which the murderer favors his admiring audience, except as an incidental and tributary portion of his own egotistical story.

To what lengths this dismissal of the very objectionable personage who persisted in tempting the Saint in the condemned cell to murder him, may be carried, we have had a recent opportunity of considering, in the case of the late lamented Mr. Dove. That amiable man, previous to taking the special express-train to Paradise which is vulgarly called the Gallows, indited a document wherein he made it manifest to all good people that the mighty and beneficent Creator of the vast Universe had specially wrought to bring it about that he should cruelly and stealthily torture, torment, and by inches slay, a weak sick woman, and that woman his wife, in order that he, Dove, as with the wings of a Dove (a little blood-stained or so, but that's not much) should be put in the way of ascending to Heaven.

Frightful as this statement is, and sickening as one would suppose it must be, to any mind capable of humbly and reverentially approaching at an inconceivable distance the idea of the Divine Majesty, there it stands in the printed records of the day: a part of the Gaol Court-Newsman's account of the visitors whom the chosen vessel received in his cell, of his proposing to sing hymns in chorus in the night season, and of the "Prison Philanthropist" declaring him to be a pattern penitent.

Now, to the Prison Philanthropist we concede all good intentions. We take it for granted that the venerable gentleman did not confer his alliterative title on himself, and that he is no more responsible for it, than a public-house is for its sign, or a ship for her figure-head. Yet, holding this horrible confusion of mind on the part of the inhuman wretch to whom he devoted so much humanity, to be shocking in itself and widely perilous in its influences, we plainly avow that we for our part cannot accept good intentions as any set-off against the production of such a mental state, and that we think the condemned cells everywhere (left to their appointed ministers of religion who are very rarely deficient in kindness and zeal) would be better without such philanthropy. What would the Home Secretary say to Professor Holloway, if that learned man applied for free admission to the condemned cells throughout England, in order that he might with his ointment anoint the throats of the convicts about to be hanged, so that under the influences of the application their final sensations should be of a mild tickling? What would the Home Secretary reply to the august members of the Hygeian Council of the British College of Health, if they made a similar request, with a view to the internal exhibition for a similar purpose of that great discovery, Morrison's pills? Even if some regular medical hand of eminence were to seek the same privilege, with a view to a drugging within the limits of the pharmacopœia—say for the philanthropic purpose of making the patient maudlin drunk with opium and peppermint, and sending him out of this world with a leer—how would the Home Secretary receive that edifying proposal? And is there nothing of greater moment involved in this revolting conceit, setting its heel on the murdered body, and daring eternity on the edge of the murderer's grave?

Pursue this advance made by the late Mr. Dove on the usual calm dismissal of the murdered person, and see where it ends. There are sent into this world two human creatures: one, a highly interesting individual in whom Providence is much concerned—Mr. Dove: one, a perfectly uninteresting individual of no account whatever, here or hereafter—Mrs. Dove. Mr. Dove being expressly wanted in the regions of the blessed, Mrs. Dove is delivered over to him, soul and body, to ensure his presence there, and provide against disappointment. There is no escape from this appalling, this impious conclusion. The special Gaol-Call which was wanting to, and was found by, Mr. Dove who is hanged, was wanting to, and was not found by, Mrs. Dove

* Pet Prisoners, volume i. page 99.

who is poisoned. Thus, the New Drop usurps the place of the Cross; and Saint John Ketch is preached to the multitude as the latest and holiest of the Prophets!

Our title is so associated with the remembrance of this exhibition, that we have been led into the present comments on it. But, the purpose with which we adopted the title was rather to illustrate the general prevalence of the practice of putting the murdered person out of the question, and the extensive following which the custom of criminals has found outside the gaols.

Two noble lords at loggerheads, each of whom significantly suggests that he thinks mighty little of the capabilities of the other, are blamed for certain disasters which did undoubtedly befall, under their distinguished administration of military affairs. They demand enquiry. A Board of their particular friends and admirers is appointed "to enquire" —much as its members might leave their cards for the noble lords with that inscription. The enquiry is in the first instance directed by one of the noble lords to the question—not quite the main question at issue—whether the Board can muzzle the Editor of the Times? The Board have the best will in the world to do it, but, finding that the Editor declines to be muzzled, perforce confess their inability to muzzle him. The enquiry then proceeds into anything else that the noble lords like, and into nothing else that the noble lords don't like. It ends in eulogiums on the soldierly qualities and conduct of both lords, and clearly shows their fitness for command to have been so completely exemplified, in failing, that the inference is, if they had succeeded they would have failed. The compliments ended, the Board breaks up (the best thing it could possibly do, and the only function it is fit for), the noble lords are decorated, and there is an end of the matter.

How like the case of the late Mr. Dove! The murdered person—by name the wasted forces and resources of England—is not to be thought of; or, if thought of, is only to be regarded as having been expressly called into being for the noble lords to make away with, and mount up to the seventh Heaven of merit upon. The President of the Board (answering to the Prison Philanthropist) sings pæans in the dark to any amount, and the only thing wanting in the parallel, is, the finishing hand of Mr. Calcraft.

Let us pass to another instance. The Law of Divorce is in such condition that from the tie of marriage there is no escape to be had, no absolution to be got, except under certain proved circumstances not necessary to enter upon here, and then only on payment of an enormous sum of money. Ferocity, drunkenness, flight, felony, madness, none of these will break the chain, without the enormous sum of money. The husband who, after years of outrage, has abandoned his wife, may at any time claim her for his property and seize the earnings on which she subsists. The most profligate of women, an intolerable torment, torture, and shame to her husband, may nevertheless, unless he be a very rich man, insist on remaining handcuffed to him, and dragging him away from any happier alliance, from youth to old age and death. Out of this condition of things among the common people, out of the galling knowledge of the impossibility of relief—aggravated, in cottages and single rooms, to a degree not easily imaginable by ill-assorted couples who live in houses of many chambers, and who, both at home and abroad, can keep clear of each other and go their respective ways—vices and crimes arise which no one with open eyes and any fair experience of the people can fail often to trace, from the Calendars of Assizes, back to this source. It is proposed a little to relax the severity of a thraldom prolonged beyond the bounds of morality, justice, and sense, and to modify the law. Instantly the singing of pæans begins, and the murdered person disappears! Authorities, lay and clerical, rise in their parliamentary places to deliver panegyrics on Marriage as an Institution (which nobody disputes to be just); they have much to relate concerning what the Fathers thought of it, and what was written, said, and done about it hundreds of years before these evils were; they set up their fancy whipping-tops, and whip away; they utter homilies without end upon the good side of the question, which is in no want of them; but, from their exalted state of vision the murdered person utterly vanishes. The tortures and wrongs of the sufferer have no place in their speeches. They felicitate themselves, like the murderers, on their own glowing state of mind, and they mount upon the mangled creature to deliver their orations, much as the Duke's man in the sham siege took his post on the fallen governor of Barataria.

So in the case of overstrained Sunday observance, and denial of innocent popular reliefs from labour. The murdered person—the consumptive, scrofulous, ricketty worker in unwholesome places, the wide prevalence of whose reduced physical condition has rendered it necessary to lower the standard of health and strength for recruiting into the army, and caused its ranks to be reinforced in the late war by numbers of poor creatures notoriously in an unserviceable bodily state —the murdered person, in this phase of his ubiquity, is put out of sight, as a matter of course. We have flaming and avenging speeches made, as if a bold peasantry, their country's pride, models of cheerful health and muscular development, were in every hamlet, town, and city, once a week ardently bent upon the practice of asceticism and the renunciation of the world; but, the murdered person, Legion, who cannot at present by any means be got at once a

week, and who does nothing all that day but gloom and grumble and deteriorate, is put out of sight as if none of us had ever heard of him! What is it to the holders forth, that wherever we live, or wherever we go, we see him, and see him with so much pity and dismay that we want to make him better by other human means than those which have missed him? To get rid of his memory, in the murdering way, and vaunt ourselves instead, is much easier.

Bankrupts are declared, greedy speculators smash, and bankers break. Who does not hear of the reverses of those unfortunate gentlemen; of the disruption of their establishments; of their wives being reduced to live upon their settlements; of the sale of their horses, equipages, pictures, wines; of the mighty being fallen, and of their magnanimity under their reverses? But, the murdered person, the creditor, investor, depositor, the cheated and swindled under whatsoever name, whose mind does he trouble? The mind of the fraudulent firm? Enquire at the House of Detention, Clerkenwell, London, and you will find that the last great fraudulent firm was no more troubled about *him*, than Mr. Dove or Mr. Palmer was by the client whom he "did for," in the way of his different line of business.

And, lastly, get an order of admission to Sir Charles Barry's palace any night in the session, and you will observe the murdered person to be as comfortably stowed away as he ever is at Newgate. What In said to Out in eighteen hundred and thirty-five, what Out retorted upon In in eighteen hundred and forty-seven, why In would have been Out in eighteen hundred and fifty-four but for Out's unparalleled magnanimity in not coming in, this, with all the contemptible ins and outs of all the Innings and Outings, shall be discoursed upon, with abundance of hymns and pæans on all sides, for six months together. But, the murdered old gentleman, Time, and the murdered matron, Britannia, shall no more come in question than the murdered people do in the cells of the penitents—unless indeed they are reproduced, as in the odious case with which we began, to show that they were expressly created for the exaltation of the speech-makers.

THE WORLD UNSEEN.

Several of our most proficient adepts in natural philosophy—including even Sir Humphry Davy—have amused themselves by guessing the forms and constitution of the living creatures that dwell on other planets belonging to our system. For instance, Saturn himself, lighter than cork, must be the habitat, it is supposed, of creatures incomparably lighter still, the grossest of whose circulating fluids are essential oils and alcoholic ethers. It is probable that these hypothetical beings do not differ from those composing the earth's past and present faunæ so much as many persons might suppose. That some, at least, of the material elements of other worlds are identical with our own, is proved by the inspection of aërolites, which supply us by their fall with new-imported, if not novel, samples of mineral. The zones of Jupiter—which cannot be other than equatorial, tropical, and temperate,—and the arctic and antarctic snows visible in the polar regions of Mars, offer conditions so similar to those of our own earth's surface, that it would really turn out an improbable fact, and an unexpected discovery, if a Jovine or a Martial menagerie were to exhibit species more extraordinary in their organisation than the antediluvian animals discovered by Cuvier. But, however that may be, one point will not be disputed:—if a balloon-load of wild creatures were to reach the earth from either of our neighbouring planets, the Zoological Society might charge a five-guineas entrance to their gardens, and would make their fortune within half-a-year.

It happens that, in a little world more accessible to us than either Jupiter or Mars, there really exist, unseen, wondrous living creatures, unknown to the large majority of the human race. If we could fit ourselves with a pair of spectacles that would enable us to see the inhabitants of Venus, distinctly,—to note what dresses they wear, how their fashions change, what is their ceremonial at births, weddings, and deaths,—the spectacle-maker would have a long list of customers, and our publishers would give us periodical illustrations—coloured and plain—of the phases which Venus's fashionable society, as well as her crescent and her waning self, assume. Yet eyes, with which we can look into another invisible world, are procurable at a reasonable rate.

"I want to make Tom Styles's young people some handsome present, but I don't know what on earth to give them;" is the oft-uttered complaint of many a worthy godfather. "They are already well set-up with dolls, rocking-horses, and baby-houses; and cakes and Christmas-trees are out of the question. Styles likes to select his childrens' books himself, even if Mrs. Styles were not so very particular, and a little too strait-laced in her views, not to say, sectarian. A present of books would be a risk to run. Do tell me, my dear Sally, what shall we give them, this time?"

Sally, a matron with her own ideas also, mentally runs the round of things presentable, and finds nothing but a list of negative items. We will step in to Sally's aid, and suggest—a microscope! It is neither high-church, nor low-church; savours neither of Puseyism, nor dissent; is perfectly unexceptional in its political tendencies, and is free from all charge of immorality or irreligion.

The microscope arrived, what is to be done with it? "See the vermin in your cistern-

water," says the advertisement in the Times, with the hope of inducing you to purchase a patent self-cleansing charcoal-filter. Don't see them, unless you are both strong-minded and strong-stomached; that's my advice. And, while I am giving it, in steps Noakes (who has heard of Styles's scientific acquisition) with a sample, in a wine-glass, from his own private pump. At the bottom of the glass a tiny milk-white speck glides along with slow but steady motion. With gentle skill it is transferred with a drop of water to the meniscus-glass of the microscope, placed in the stand, peeped at with a low power as a transparent object — and what is beheld? Something very like a whale of the spermaceti species, protruding its huge lips, and glaring with a pair of coal-black eyes. Its substance is an elastic gelatinous blubber composed of grains, which are visibly distinct like the berries in a bunch of grapes. Its fleshy, granulated mass heaves and sinks, dilates and contracts, at every motion. But it has clouded the water by a voluntary act. Let us strand our whale on an ebony shore by the agency of a pin, to see how he will behave on dry land. He is burst—he is poured out like a curdled fluid—he is dried up—he is gone! Nothing is left of him but a morsel of film scarcely visible to the naked eye.

Little Tom is chasing a white cabbage-butterfly on the grass-plot. It is too much for him; it darts away between a laurel and a rose-bush. No; he has it; it has been stopped by the wide-spread net of a large garden-spider—the diadem. Stay a moment, Tom, before you brush the web utterly away. We will catch a portion of the tissue on this slip of window glass. It makes a nice little tailor's pattern of real gossamer cloth for summer use. But, instead of the threads crossing each other at right angles like the warp and the woof of human looms, there is a framework of threads like the spokes of a wheel, across which other threads are woven round and round. Look; the power of the object-glass is high, and we have got into the field of view a point where the threads cross. But observe, the radiating thread is plain and smooth, like a simple iron wire; while the concentric threads are studded at intervals with transparent beads of different sizes, one or two little ones intervening between each large one, like artificial necklaces of pearls. They are chaplets and rosaries on which the flies may say their prayers before they receive the finishing stroke from their executioner, the diadem-spider. It is the viscid globules which appear to give to these threads their peculiarly adhesive character. If you throw dust on a circular spider's web, you may observe that it adheres to the threads which are spirally disposed, but not to those that radiate from the centre to the circumference, because the former only are strung with gummy pearls. You now know how to distinguish with the microscope the thread of the warp in a spider's web, from the thread of the woof.

The butterfly flutters in Tom's little fingers. Let it flutter—hold against it another slip of glass. The slip is covered with white dust. Let us submit that to the searching power; and, lo! we have a collection of scales or feathers, with the quill as distinctly visible as that of the pen I now hold in my hand. Some are broad and flat, with deep-cut notches at their end, semi-transparent, as if made of gelatine, and clearly marked with longitudinal stripes—proof that the instrument is not a bad one—others are more taper in their proportions, opaline in texture, mottled with cloudy spots, and terminate very curiously in a tuft of bristles, each of which seems to have a little bead at its tip end. What can be the use of them? Feather-scales terminating in a pencil of hairs like the stamens of flowers? But, the butterfly is stark dead—Tom has pinched its body so tight to prevent its escape. It is much too enormous a creature to be looked at entire with a microscope; we must cut up its carcase, as a butcher does an ox, and serve it out piecemeal. Then we ascertain that its horns or antennæ are covered with scales; they are elegant shafts, like the trunks of young palm-trees. We have rubbed off some of the scales in our clumsy dissection—they are strewn on the slip of glass beside their parent stem; and we may remark that each scale has at its top a single notch cut out of it like the letter V, or the wedge of cake which a schoolboy would produce with two strokes of the knife, if allowed to help himself. Our butterfly's eyes are composite, made up of eyelets to be counted—or left uncounted—by hundreds. His feet have some resemblance to a hand, which you might imagine to be mainly composed of a couple of broad miller's-thumbs; but the wonder of wonders is his elaborate proboscis, folding up spirally, composed of an infinity of corkscrew vessels, and furnished with elastic suckers and pumps. All this we behold as clearly, though bit by bit, as we see that a centenarian oak consists of roots, trunk, branches, and leaves. One of these days some ingenious artist in taxidermy might treat us to a model of the cabbage-butterfly, putting together its parts as was done with the model of the dodo, only on a highly magnified scale. Nothing but such a property butterfly as this (to use theatrical phraseology), with every plumelet as visible as those on a turkey-cock, can give us an idea of the stately presence of a papilionaceous dandy as he appears in the eyes of his fellow lepidopteræ.

Dust is commonly spoken of as a precise, unvarying, specific thing; the same under all circumstances and in all places. Dust is a nuisance to be despised, to be wiped away, or where not, to have the word Slut reproachfully traced on it with a finger-tip. But

the microscope reveals to us dust as existing under a thousand charming and admirable forms. The microscopist is obliged to study dust attentively, that he may not mistake some stray hair, or scale, for a portion of the object he is engaged in examining. There is antediluvian dust, which was organised into beauty before Adam had come into the world to behold it; there are dust-skeletons, which constitute mountains in their immense aggregate; there is living dust, which drops from cheese, or metamorphoses itself out of farinaceous matter, or discolours water, or eats through solid oak. On a ship out at sea, leagues and leagues away from land, there falls a shower of impalpable dust, brought from the great desert by the heated winds, and close examination proves it to consist of the remains of dead animalcules. There is fertilising dust, or pollen, without whose influence neither grain nor fruit would reward the cultivator's care. Pollen is very curious as an object of study, even if we look no further than its outward form, which varies greatly in different plants. The rose and the poppy have pollen like grains of wheat, magnified into semi-transparent weavers' shuttles; that of the mallow resembles cannon-balls covered with spikes; the fuschia has pollen like bits of half-melted sticky sugar-candy, with which a small quantity of horse-hair has become entangled; the passion-flower has pollen-grains resembling Chinese carved ivory balls. Pollen, however, varies more when dry than when moist; for the effect of the imbibition of fluid, which usually takes place when the pollen is placed in contact with it, is to soften down angularities, and to bring the cell nearer to the typical sphere. Besides the extraordinary markings and inequalities of their surface, most pollen-grains have what appear to be pores, or slits, in their outer coat, varying in number in different species, through which the inner coat protrudes itself, when the bulk of its contents has been increased by absorption. Sometimes the pores are covered by little disc-like pieces, or lids, which fall off when that wonderful phenomenon occurs—the protrusion of the pollen tube. This action takes place naturally, when the pollen-grains fall upon the surface of the stigma, which is moistened with a viscid secretion; and the pollen-tubes, at first mere protrusions of the inner coat of their cell, insinuating themselves between the loosely-packed cells of the stigma, grow downward through the style, sometimes even to the length of several inches, until they reach the ovarium. The first change—namely, the protrusion of the inner membrane through the pores of the exterior, may be made to take place artificially, by moistening the pollen with water, thin syrup, or dilute acids (different kinds of pollen-grains requiring a different mode of treatment), but the subsequent extension by growth will take place only under the natural conditions. These latter facts, however, belong rather to the botanist than the microscopist. Pollen, for winter observation, may be stored and mounted during the season of flowers.

Another interesting class of objects, slightly assimilating in form to pollen-grains, but visible with instruments of much lower power, are the eggs of insects. If we fancy them to be like bird's eggs, universally oval and smooth, as if cast in moulds of the same pattern, though differing in size—we mistake greatly. Egg-cups, wherein to eat the eggs of insects, must be quite a fancy article of design, if they are to fit their contents and answer their purpose. Examine a butterfly's egg, which you have found sticking to the back of a leaf, and the chances are, that it resembles a mince pie, or a tartlet, or an elaborate sponge-cake. Decorative confectioners, in search of novelty, would glean valuable hints from insect's eggs, especially from those of butterflies and moths. The silk-worm's egg would make a very pretty pudding-shape; and I should be delighted to see a box of sweet biscuits modelled after the eggs of the peacock butterfly, who deposits her future progeny on nettle-leaves. The flea lays a pretty little white egg; the bug's egg is like a circular game-pie with a standing crust, the lid of which is lifted when the young one makes its exit after hatching. The blow-fly's egg is like a white cucumber with longitudinal stripes. The shells, or skins, of insects' eggs are also extremely curious when emptied of their contents. The eggs themselves are somewhat troublesome to preserve, to be looked at; if you leave them as they are, they are almost sure to hatch; if you squeeze them between two plates of glass, they are crushed to a smash and a mess; and if you boil them, they shrivel up and spoil. One of these days we shall hit upon a method of taking accurate casts of the eggs of insects, so as to publish them, as we do busts of Victoria. The egglets well deserve the honour, on account of their great beauty, the regularity of their form, the symmetry of the markings on their surface, and their easy visibility.

To return to our dust. There is a tribe of organised beings called Diatomaceæ (for shortness diatoms), the name being derived from a Greek word which signifies division, or dissection. They may be Englished as brittle-worts, because the forms with which naturalists first became acquainted, grow in coherent masses that may be readily cut or broken through. It is disputed whether they belong to the animal or the vegetable kingdom. On the one hand, a green colour and a simplicity of cellular structure are not decisive proofs of their being plants; on the other hand, mere motion is no proof that an organised substance is an animal. Innumerable minute living creatures are furnished with hair-like instruments of locomotion, called cilia, from he Latin word for eyelashes. The rapid

vibration of these lashes in water causes the motion, in the same way that oars propel a boat, or — for a better comparison—as the paddle-wings of a penguin urge it on in its submarine chace after fishy prey. The vibration of cilia in animalcules is sometimes so rapid—is performed with such inconceivable swiftness—as only to be perceptible by the currents it produces. When, however, the creatures become faint and dying, the action of the cilia, then performed at a more sober pace, is distinctly visible to the human eye with the aid of the microscope. Now, Ehrenberg and Kützing place the diatoms amongst the earliest forms of animal life. Mr. Hogg has observed a very remarkable ciliary arrangement in many of the more common diatoms. He has attentively watched a diatomean moving slowly across the field of the microscope; when, upon meeting with an obstacle to its progress, it has changed its course, or pushed the obstacle aside, as if conscious of an impediment. Before satisfying himself of the presence of cilia, he thought the motion of these little creatures somewhat remarkable, steering their course as they did by a power which they were evidently able to call into action or restrain at will. In other organisms — the desmidaceæ — the ciliary motion seen may be believed to be due to a physical force acting independently of any controlling power; in short, the creature seems to have no will of its own. It is a little steamer with the fires lighted and the paddles going, but without a crew, a pilot, or a captain. On the contrary, with the Diatomaceæ, their cilia may be said to act in obedience to a will; for intervals of rest and motion are clearly perceptible. Consequently, a diatom is an animal.

Diatoms are beautiful things to look at, living or dead; for an unchangeable portion of their delicate persons consists of a flinty shield, which retains its intricate markings and perforations after the lapse of ages—after digestion in potent stomachs, after burnings in fire, after boilings in acid, after blowings about by the wind, after petrifactions in rocks, after grindings in mills. There are extinct and existing, as there are marine and fresh-water species. To describe the appearance of a diatom under a good microscope is about as easy as to describe a veil of Honiton lace expressly worked for a royal bride, or to give in words a distinct idea of the Gothic tracery to be wondered at in the churches at Rouen and Amiens. Diatoms are easy to find, and yet not easy to lay hands on when found. The unskilled manipulator may for some time endeavour to adjust a slide, having a piece of glass exposed not larger in size than a pea, on which he is informed an invisible object worthy his attention is fixed, before he is rewarded by a sight of the Triceratium favus, extracted from the mud of the too muddy Thames. To convey a popular though rough notion of its appearance, it looks like a triangular piece of what ladies call insertion-work, of the finest texture. The hexagonal markings of the cells are very beautiful; and at each corner there is a little projecting horn or hook.

Amongst the diatoms, my own favourites are the Naviculæ, possibly because they are my first love, never having seen a diatom before till a charming Navicula met my wondering gaze, and I now carry it about, as a bosom friend, in my waistcoat pocket. Navicula is Latin for a little ship; that is all the mystery of its nomenclature. Look, Tom, at this slip of glass neatly pasted over with paper. To its centre is applied a square of thinner glass, so that the objects are mounted between the two glasses, and the paper is cut away, so as to leave a transparent circle, about the size of a fourpenny-piece. Look sharp, Tom; what do you see within its circumference? What, nothing? Absolutely nothing, unless the suspicion of a little fine dust? Observe the mark I have made with a pencil on the paper at the edge of the circle. Close to that we shall find something beautiful. I slip my slide in the microscope, and there I have it. The tiny bark is a boat of cut rock crystal, fit to float across a sea of light; itself might almost be believed to be fashioned out of solidified light. The central line must be the keel; the translucent planking is clearly visible; and around the sides are cut symmetrical notches, to serve as rullocks for ethereal rowers to navigate this brilliant gondola. What exact Navicula this is, I know not. The slide was sent me as a specimen of N. hippocampus, of which, Tom, you see there are plenty,—those long narrow transparent Indian canoes twisted into the line of beauty. But my Navicula belongs to none of them; the object-mounter has given it into the bargain, and I am very much obliged to him for it.

Naviculæ are numerous, and widely dispersed. The green Navicula, about the hundredth part of an inch in length, was found by Dr. Mantell in a pool on Clapham Common. The golden Navicula is another beautiful species, so named from the numerous points within the shell giving it a bright yellow appearance. The shell is an oblong oval, and has upon it numerous delicate and regular flutings. In the vicinity of Hull many very interesting varieties of Diatomaceæ have been found, the beauty of the varied forms of which delight the microscopist. It has been shown by Mr. Sollit that the markings on some of the shells were so fine as to range between the thirty-thousandth and the sixty-thousandth of an inch; the Pleurosigma strigilis having the strongest markings, and the Navicula acus the finest. Certain diatoms are common both to the old world and the new. The beautiful Meridion circulare abounds in many localities in this country; but there is none in which

it presents itself in such rich luxuriance as in the mountain brooks about West Point in the United States, the bottoms of which, according to Professor Bailey, are literally covered in the first warm days of spring with a ferrugineous-coloured mucous matter, about a quarter of an inch thick, which, on examination by the microscope, proves to be filled with millions and millions of these exquisitely beautiful siliceous bodies. Every submerged stone, twig, and spear of grass is enveloped by them; and the waving plume-like appearance of a filamentous body covered in this way is often very elegant.

The microscope startles us with the incredible information that gigantic mountain ranges, such as the mighty Andes, are principally composed of portions of invisible animalcules. We need take no man's word for the fact, because we may see with our own proper eyes, that the remains of these minute animals have added much more to the mass of materials which compose the exterior crust of the globe than the bones of elephants, hippopotami, and whales. A stratum of slate in Austria, fourteen feet thick, was the first that was discovered to consist almost entirely of minute flinty shells. This slate, as well as the Tripoli, found in Africa, is ground to a powder, and sold for polishing. A microscope shows you the skeletons in tripoli. Turkey-stone, used for sharpening razors and knives; and rotten-stone, of which housemaids are fond for brightening up their rusty fire-irons; are also composed of infusorial remains. The bergh-mehl, or mountain-meal, has been found in a stratum thirty feet thick in Norway and Lapland, almost the entire mass being composed of flinty skeletons of Diatomaceæ. In times of scarcity, this earth is mixed with flour by the poor inhabitants both of the north of Europe and of China to eke out their scanty subsistence, and cheat their stomachs by the semblance of a meal. At Holderness, in digging out a submerged forest on the coast, numbers of fresh-water fossil Diatomaceæ have been discovered, though the sea flows over the place at every tide. Ehrenberg discovered, in the rock of the volcanic island of Ascension, many siliceous shells of fresh-water infusoria; and the same indefatigable investigator found that the immense ocean of sandy deserts in Africa were, in great part, composed of the shells of animalcules.

Very beautiful diatoms are found in the different kinds of guano—of course when genuine, and not fabricated out of clay and gas refuse. It is rather surprising that the presence or absence of these charming little curiosities has not been made a test of the genuineness of the article, especially as the process of detecting them is not so difficult or complicated as several of the modes of analysis usually resorted to by agricultural chemists. The history of these diatoms is simply this: they were first swallowed at the bottom of the Pacific by certain marine animals, probably shell-fish, sea-mice, star-fish, and echini. These first devourers have been devoured by fish proper, and these other fish by gulls and the rest of the sea-fowl, whose accumulated excrement forms the guano. The diatoms are left in the sediment formed by washing the dung. Abundant specimens may be obtained from the refuse which remains when the gardener has poured off his potfull of liquid manure. The mode of procuring diatoms from guano, and of preparing them as microscopic objects, is given at pages three hundred and thirty-seven and eight of Dr. Carpenter's learned Microscope and its Revelations. The marine forms of these creatures are also found in considerable numbers in the stomachs of oysters, scallops, whelks, and other molluscs, especially the bivalves, or the two-shelled species, in those of the crab and lobster, and even in those of the sole, turbot, and other flat fish. Several species rarely or never occurring in the usual haunts of their ardent student, Professor Smith, have been supplied in abundance by the careful dissection of the above microphagists. Guano diatoms are mostly invisible to the naked eye; like Naviculæ, under a microscope of clearly defining power, they make you think you are peeping, by mistake, into some new-invented multiple kaleidoscope. There are perfectly symmetrical forms, in circles, some brightly coloured with green and blue; others spread out in network of black and white, mixed with fragments of lace, bright prisms, sharp spikes, and fragments of patterns for stage finery and architectural decoration. The complete circlets are marvels of highly-wrought workmanship, whose character has been attempted to be indicated by such names as spider-disc, sun-shield, sieve-disc, and twist-disc. One ingenious mode of appropriating these tempting minutiæ, when found, deserves mention here; as the tools for manipulating things unseen will not obviously occur to every student. Select a fine hair which has been split at its free extremity, into from three to five or six parts; and having fixed it in common needle-holder, by passing it through a slit in a piece of cork, use it as a forceps, with the help of a moderate magnifier. When the split extremity of the hair touches the glass slide on which the objects lie, its parts separate from each other to an amount proportionate to the pressure; and, on being brought up to the coveted morsel, are easily made to seize it, when it can be transferred as a single specimen to another slide. But where to find hairs thus split at the extremity? They may always be had from a long-used shaving-brush. Those should be selected which have thin split portions so closely in contact, that they appear single until touched at their ends.

And thus the human hand contrives to meddle with the world unseen, as with

everything else; it even manages to work therein, and leave traces of its craft, which are visible to microscopic eyes alone. Some remarkable specimens, the production of Nobert, of Griefswall, Prussia, were presented at the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. They consisted of ten bands engraved on a slip of glass, each band composed of a certain number of parallel lines; the lines in each succeeding band were closer than those in the preceding one. The closeness at which they were ruled, varied from eleven thousand to fifty thousand to the inch. It is difficult, after the above statement, to convey an idea of the real appearance of this system of bands before it is magnified; for the entire space occupied by all the ten bands is somewhat greater in breadth—not much—than the preceding lines with which we have marked, in type, the parenthesis "not much."

More wonderful still; M. Froment, of Paris, celebrated for the micrometer scales he has produced, has effected an artistic tour de force of the highest interest as an example of mechanical ingenuity; he has succeeded in engraving upon glass, manuscripts and drawings on a scale of minuteness no less surprising, though far more difficult of execution, than the bands of Mr. Nobert. Fancy a white circular spot, about the size of the lower loop of the letter "a" of our usual type. On such a spot—namely, within a circle of glass the fortieth of an inch in diameter—M. Froment wrote for Dr. Lardner, in less than five minutes, the following sentence: "Written as a microscopic object for Dr. Lardner, by Froment, à Paris. 1852." As the method by which these marvellous effects are produced is not yet patented, Dr. Lardner is not at liberty to explain its details.

But enough, for once, about invisibilities. A good microscope will serve for several generations; a good pair of eyes will hardly last one. Therefore, after a long day's pleasure with powerful instruments, let us allow our own optics repose.

SALOME AND I.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

I WAS born at Liverpool, but left it at such an early age that I remember nothing of it except the Everton toffee-shop, and dimly the Mersey, at low water. My mother died when I was two years old. A great and terrible misfortune broke her heart—a possibility in which I firmly believe. On her death-bed she entrusted me to the care of my grandmother, who was the only near relative I had left. When I was four years of age we left Liverpool together, my grandmother and I, and journeyed away by coach into the heart of Cumberland, to a little market-town buried from the world among the fells and moors. This journey lives in my memory as a magnificent panorama—a succession of brilliant pictures, exceeding any that I have since seen, in splendour.

The little town whither we went to seek our new home, and which I will call Howthwaite, was the birth-place of my mother, and the spot where my grandmother had passed her younger and more prosperous days, as landlady of the White Swan, pronounced by commercial gentlemen to be the best inn in the county; and they are pretty good judges of comfort, I believe. Considering the size and population of Howthwaite, its charitable institutions were numerous. Among others more or less antiquated, but good after their fashion, was one for the relief and maintenance of eight poor widows, being relicts of tradesmen of the town. As my grandmother came within this category, and as she was possessed of considerable interest (having seen better days), she was nominated to fill the vacancy, by death, which happened a few months after our arrival at Howthwaite.

Chalmy's Hospital was built by its founder—Geoffrey Chalmy—a rich master woolcomber of Howthwaite, in the year fifteen hundred and sixty-five, as his arms, with initials and date below carved in the arch of the large gateway that opens into Highgate, closely testify. Indeed, the architecture of the place is proof sufficient of its antiquity. The eight small two-roomed cottages form two sides of a square, in the middle of which stands a dilapidated fountain, dried up years ago. The remaining sides of the square are formed—one by the gate already mentioned—over which is the master's house; and the other by a second gateway, over which is the library; and, through this gateway, runs the road to the small plots of garden, and so past them to the ivy-covered school and the boys' play-ground. Our windows fortunately looked into this garden, apportioned and laid out in accordance with the varying fancies of eight poor old women; and I ever found a ready ingress to it through the casement. Thence our view across the fields was unimpeded for more than a mile, till the towering front of Scawfell interposed between us and the world beyond. This hill and I were friends from the first. It seemed to my childish fancy to reflect the varying moods of my mind; sometimes bright and sunny, bathed in the flush of dawn; sometimes, and more lovely than ever, flickered fitfully by fleecy clouds; sometimes hid for days in impenetrable mist; while, at other times, its bare forehead rose, dark, stern, and immitigable into the gloomy sky.

Forming part of Geoffrey Chalmy's charity—and blessed be his memory for it!—was a school for the education of forty poor boys, from the ages of ten to fourteen. The costume of these lads may have been considered graceful, perhaps, even fashionable, in the sixteenth century, but is decidedly barbarous now. Mr. Carnforth was master at the time I write. These peculiarities struck me, I remember, when I saw him first:—he was deeply pitted

with the small-pox; he wore a very large frill at the bosom of his shirt, and he took snuff copiously, which he carried, not fastidiously in a box, but loosely in his waistcoat-pocket. But you soon lost sight of these little notabilities, when you came to know him better, in the goodness of his heart, and the grave simplicity of his character. He was allowed to take ten private pupils, in addition to the forty regular scholars. I became a private pupil; being still too young to be enrolled among the blue-coated fraternity. And so began the quiet routine of my school-life, unmarked for some years in the calendar of my recollections by any noteworthy event.

The garden was my great delight, and my happiest hours were spent in labouring in it; for my lameness prevented me from joining in any of the more active games of childhood, and I had thus much leisure at my command. I cultivated nothing but flowers; and as Mr. Carnforth was a great botanist, I had the benefit of his advice, together with frequent presents of seeds and shoots from his garden. Indeed, I soon became a great favourite with the master. I think it was my infirmity that first attracted him towards me; for pain or helplessness of any kind won his sympathy at once. But other points of liking soon grew up between us. I became his companion on many of his excursions among the hills—for I could walk well enough with the aid of a stick—where he went to seek for specimens of rare mosses, which was his hobby at that time. My pace suited well with his slow and meditative way of walking; and I could not run from his side after every butterfly or pretty flower on the way. The master was no great talker, either; and silence was ever one of my virtues. But, at the bottom, it was the child-like simplicity of his own heart that formed the strongest bond between us.

Our little household was not a very lively one; for protracted pain and ill-health rendered me habitually taciturn, often morose: My grandmother seldom smiled. I know now that she had good reason for never smiling again. Many a time, as I lay awake at midnight in my little closet pressing my burning forehead against the cold wall, have I heard her pacing from end to end of her bedroom, muttering and sobbing to herself. One night, when this was the case, I arose, and, through her half-opened door, saw her walking to and fro—for it was moonlight—wringing her hands, and muttering incoherent words; her long night-dress sweeping the floor, and her grey hair falling wildly round her face. Stopping suddenly, she drew aside the curtain, and peered into the moonlit garden. "O, William! William! O, my son,—my son!" she cried, "living or dead; where art thou?" I crept back terrified to bed; and did not forget that dreary picture for many weeks.

Often I longed to throw my arms round her neck, and beseech her to let me comfort her; but there was ever such a stern self-concentration about her—such a shrouding of her grief from all consolation or kindly sympathy from without, that my heart was chilled and frightened back into itself: we both suffered on in silence. Thus, it seemed but natural that our hearth should be a gloomy one. A dark and impalpable something—a cloud without shape—seemed to weigh upon my heart, and to enshroud my early years within its gloomy influence. This shadow, undefined, but ever present, interposed between the world and me. I remember that I sometimes used to wonder in my childish way, why it was so. I could not understand it. They all seemed to love me so much, and the world was so beautiful, that there was evidently something wrong somewhere; but where I could not tell.

At ten years of age I was elected a regular blue-coat scholar. With this change began another epoch in my existence.

I have made mention of the library. It formed part of the Chalmy Charity; and consisted of a considerable number of rare and valuable works—old tomes in black letter, illustrated with barbarous woodcuts in which the men were larger than the trees and houses; large folios in Latin and Greek; and a few scarce books in old French; many of them having remnants of the chains still attached to them by which they had been formerly fastened to the wall. The collection was much frequented by the scholars and antiquaries of the neighbourhood. One of these gentlemen, wisely conceiving that a classified catalogue would be of great assistance to the frequenters of the place, Mr. Carnforth was unanimously requested to draw one up. It was a task well suited to his tastes, and therefore a labour of love. He called me to assist him in sorting the volumes, and affixing the numbers; and we worked so assiduously during the long winter nights, that, by the beginning of March, the catalogue was complete. It was universally approved of. I quite regretted the completion of our task, for I began to love the old folios right well. I could not read them, it is true; but the master had translated many passages for me as we went on, besides the whole of the title pages; many of which were very curious. Their very age and mouldiness attracted me; and I pored over the grim old type for many an hour, making out a word here and there, and wondering what it was all about. I thought what a grand thing it would be to be able to read them like Mr. Carnforth; and, after much pondering, I determined to master their secrets and extract whatever hidden virtue they might possess. Mr. Carnforth stared at me through his spectacles in mild surprise when I mentioned my project

to him, and endeavoured to alarm me by recounting some of the difficulties of the way; but I was resolute.

From the time when I could first read I had always been fond of books, as was but natural, considering my inability to join in any of the amusements of my age; and, living thus in such a quiet, self-sustaining way, my new studies seemed but a pleasant variation of my usual readings.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

One evening in spring, as I was busily employed in watering my flowers, my grandmother came into the garden, leading by the hand a girl apparently about a year younger than myself.

"Here's a playfellow for you, Ralph," she said. "It's little Salome Graham, Mrs. Graham's grand-daughter. She's only here for a fortnight—so you must make the most of it together."

Mrs. Graham was one of the old widows, and I had frequently heard her speak of her little Salome. She was a thin, shy-looking girl, not at all pretty—at least I thought so then. Her pale face, somewhat sunken about the cheeks, and the dark circles under her eyes, told a tale of ill-health, or sorrow; perhaps of both. Her countenance was wanting in that expression of openness, and joyous frankness, so attractive in youth. It was too quiet, impassive, and self-restrained for that of a child; and seemed as if she had, even at that early age, been taught to repress all emotions either of joy, or sorrow, to conceal every child-like impulse. Her long, black hair was demurely plaited away, without either wave or curl, under a thick silk net. She had on a somewhat faded green silk frock; over which she wore a black silk apron of quite an old-fashioned womanly pattern; the pockets stuffed with cotton-balls, scissors, and other industrial aids. She carried Mrs. Graham's kitten in her long, thin arms, and sat down on the grass without speaking, to caress it more at her ease; while my grandmother placed herself with her knitting on a bench close by. I was so confused by this unexpected apparition, that I forgot to remove my can from the plant I was watering till the soil round it became a complete puddle. She gave me one glance with her dark, melancholy eyes, and then bent them again shyly on the kitten. The expression of those eyes troubled me more than anything else. Melancholy they certainly were; but so restless, so earnestly searching, as though they were looking for some unknown good, that I could not help wondering in my simple way, what it was they had lost, and why they should burn with such intelligence, while the rest of her countenance was so devoid of vivacity.

I went on for some time, mechanically watering my flowers, without daring to say a word. When I looked at her again, she was bending over a bunch of lilies near which she sat; peering into their delicate bells, and gently lifting up their drooping heads.

"Are you fond of flowers?" at length I ventured to ask.

"Very!" she replied, with an indrawing of her breath, like a half sigh. "I see them so seldom."

"Where, then, do you live?" I asked.

"In London," she answered.

"In that grand and magnificent place! How I should like to live there!"

"Yes, but there are no flowers," she replied. "At least, I never have any, though they tell me there are plenty to be bought in the markets. But my aunt does not care for flowers; and she won't let me have a bunch in my bed-room, because, she says, it is not healthy. And then there are no birds in London; only the twittering sparrows, and a few robins; and no hay-fields nor barns. O, I do love the country so much!"

"But there must be plenty of flowers and hayfields outside London," I urged.

"Yes, but I have no time to go and look for them," she said. "I have always plenty of sewing to do for aunt, and many many tasks to learn; and besides, aunt won't let me walk out alone; and she likes the town,—O much better than the country!"

"Ah, then, if I were you, I should run away into the country on Sundays, out of sight of the big, smoky town, and ramble all day in the woods and fields."

"On Sundays!" she exclaimed, as if surprised and offended, and losing at once all the animation that had begun to illumine her countenance. "But on Sundays we go to church in the mornings and evenings. And in the afternoon I read the Bible to aunt; or get a collect off by heart, while she sleeps a little. And then, in the evening, we always have tart for supper, and go to bed early."

I went on watering my flowers in silence for some time after this, fearing I had offended her.

"How beautiful these lilies are!" she said at length, in a low voice, as if speaking to herself.

"There's thousands of wild ones for the plucking, round Langley Farm," I said.

"And can we go and get some?"

"Ay; it's only two miles off. To-morrow's our half-holiday; so we'll go, if you like, and bring back as many as you can carry."

"O, that will be delightful!" she exclaimed, joyfully. "But I must go and ask grandma," she added, more quietly, "because she might not be pleased, you know, if I went without her permission."

She skipped off at once to ask, and quickly returned, with a smile that plainly indicated her application had been successful.

By this time it was nearly dark, and my

flowers were all well drenched. A few minutes afterwards her grandmother called her in to supper; so she bade me good-night in a sweet affectionate way, as if we had been acquainted for years; and called back to me, as she opened the door, not to forget our ramble on the morrow.

My Greek verbs, that night, were more impracticable than ever, and would not be mastered on any account. Far sweeter to me than Attic or Doric dialect was Salome's soft southern accent, which kept ringing in my memory like an echo of blissful music. It was so different from our broad north country tongue. Then her words were so well chosen; and her sentences so fluent and elegantly turned; and she was so self-possessed when speaking, never hesitating nor stammering in the least, that I felt like an awkward booby in comparison, and wondered how I dared address her at all. Musing thus, I fell asleep; but was haunted through the night by those restless melancholy eyes, and those long white arms; the property, as I dreamt, of a procession of people, but always preserving a wonderful individuality of their own.

The next day was warm, hazy, and spring-like, though somewhat moist. Light feathery mists floated, like the grey hair of old age, round the scarred summit of Scawfell. We set off soon after dinner. As long as we were in the town, Salome walked in demure silence by my side, like a well-bred young lady incapable of the slightest enthusiasm. But when we reached the fields, she seemed transformed at once into a different creature. Her eyes sparkled, her whole being became animated. She fluttered like a butterfly, before, behind, and on every side of me; plucking a flower here, and another there, so that her straw hat was soon filled with flowers; while thick masses of hair, escaping from her net, fell confusedly round her neck. Sometimes a cry of delight gave notice that she had seen another nest in the hedge; sometimes she chased the lazy crows till they rose heavily from the ground, flapping their large black wings; sometimes a golden beetle, or other strange insect glancing in the grass, attracted her keen vision, and fascinated her into stillness for a moment, while she watched its motions with a curiosity not unmingled with childlike fear.

We found even more lilies than I had expected. For nearly an acre round Langley Farm, near the lake, the ground was thick with them. I know not whether that black and gloomy pool affected Salome as it always did me. It may be that she was simply fatigued; but she sat down beside it, and fell a musing as she gazed into its unfathomable depths, and let her hat full of flowers lay unheeded by her side. Many a time, when a child, have I too gazed into its awful blackness, till I seemed to see endless processions of armed men marching far beneath its surface; or a long caravan of camels wending slowly through an Arabian desert; or the ruins of a castle, buried in its waters a thousand years ago; or, worse than all, a ghastly figure, with long floating hair and wide open eyes, that stared at me stonily from the bottom, while it beckoned me with its bony finger, till the spell became so strong that I could hardly tear myself away from the brink, or resist the horrid temptation I felt, to leap into its silent depths.

She rose up at length, like one awaking from a dream; and we wandered off together toward the old farm-house at the head of the gorge. I was well known there, for I had frequently written letters for the old farmer, he being no scholar, to his eldest son, settled in the valley of the Mississippi. He was busy somewhere in the fields, but his wife gave us a cordial welcome; and set before us honey, and home-made bread, and new milk in white china cups. We feasted sumptuously, seated at the foot of the large chesnut that overshadows the porch. Nothing could be more delicious. And then we must see the garden, and the busy hives, and the sleek cows, and be initiated into the mystery of making butter. All these things I had seen frequently before; but to Salome everything was fresh and interesting. The sun was beginning to go down before we left the farmhouse, and we had still our lilies to gather. And so we returned home in the cool dewy evening, laden with our flowery spoil.

The happy days sped swiftly on. Salome and I became to each other like brother and sister. She had come like a sunbeam, and, as such, she must soon pass away; leaving nothing but memory behind. That intense craving for something to love, common, I think, to all children, was now satisfied for a time, and I was all the happier for its being so. She had read none but serious books. I opened for her the golden gates of Fairy-land, and introduced her into the wondrous world of fiction—not indeed that it was fiction to her, dear child, but a bright and glorious reality; though I myself was growing rather too old for such things. When tired of reading, we easily peopled a world of our own, in which we experienced the most astonishing adventures together, escaped all sorts of dangers in the most wonderful manner, and were subject to the most surprising changes of fortune.

We saw with dismay the end of the fortnight approaching. Mrs. Chinfeather, Salome's aunt, was to call for her on her way back from Scotland; whither she had gone for the benefit of her health. I was on the watch for Mrs. Chinfeather when she came. I was curious to see what kind of a person she was. My wish was gratified; I saw her.

She was a well-fed lady, of an uncertain age, handsomely dressed in green satin. I had an opportunity of studying her better

on the following day, when I had the honour of being admitted into her presence. She was copious in person, and overflowing in manner. She wore her black hair in long, thick, glossy ringlets; and had a rich, rosy colour in her cheeks that I greatly admired. She was much addicted to ear-rings and gay caps, which latter were always decked with a profusion of brilliant ribbons, that fluttered round her as she moved, and gave her quite a rakish appearance, if I may apply such a term to so respectable a lady. She had a grand sweeping way with her in conversation, as if she were showering sovereigns around, and patronised everyone who had anything whatever to do with her.

"Why, Salome, child, how brown you are grown?" were her first words to her niece, after coldly kissing her. "And freckled, too! Why, you look a perfect fright. And my last words to you were to beg of you to keep out of the sun; and only to take a walk, not too far at a time, in the cool of the mornings and evenings. You see the effects of being disobedient. I'm sure anybody would take you for a milk-maid!"

She honoured my grandmother with a call, and had the kindness to invite her to take tea with her. She even condescended to notice me, and I was much impressed thereby.

"How comfortable it is to think," said Mrs. Chinfeather, at the conclusion of her visit, as she rose to go, "that respected old age finds such an asylum as this! I almost wish I were an old woman myself, that I might apply for one of these cottages; they are so pleasantly situated, and look so picturesque. But, good morning, Mrs. Wrangford. Come early, if you please; and you can also bring your boy with you. I hear that he is rather clever at his books; and I like to encourage anything of that kind."

Mrs. Chinfeather received us with much affability. Mrs. Graham and Mr. Carnforth were already there. After tea was over, whist was introduced: sixpenny points. Mrs. Chinfeather never lost a game all the evening; and of course, Mr. Carnforth, being her partner, won also. Seated in my quiet corner, unnoticed but observant, I could not fail to see how Mrs. Chinfeather monopolised Mr. Carnforth, and tried her best to fascinate him; while he, unused to female society, knew not what to make of all her delicate attentions, patronisingly bestowed indeed; but still very flattering, as coming from so charming a lady. The very simplicity of his character, however, defeated Mrs. Chinfeather's tactics, and preserved him from a danger that would have been fatal to many others.

Mrs. Chinfeather was kind enough to give me a serious book to read, which, I am afraid, I didn't sufficiently benefit by. I sat on a low stool on one side of the fire, and Salome on the other. She, dear girl, had got about half-a-score of tasks to learn, and her aunt took care she did not waste much time; hearing her repeat them in the intervals of the games, or lecturing her on the evils of idleness. I have never liked Lindley Murray since that evening; he was so hard on poor Salome, and rung such changes of mood and tense in her brain, that he quite bewildered her. She was no longer the Salome of the previous fortnight—joyous, affectionate, and blithe as a young bird; but Salome as I first saw her—dull, languid, and apparently insensible to everything but the drudgery on which she was engaged. All life, all animation, was gone; even the healthful colour that had begun to mantle in her cheeks had suddenly vanished. Only at intervals a timid and sorrowful glance revealed what was passing within. Mrs. Chinfeather seemed gifted with ubiquitous eyes; for, whenever I happened to forget for a few moments the book in my hands, and gazed over it at Salome in mute surprise, I was sure to be quickly recalled to my duty by that lady's short, dry cough, and by the cold, penetrating glance of her slaty eyes, which were I could feel, rather than see—bent fixedly on me.

The hours wore slowly away, and the time for departure at length arrived. Mrs. Chinfeather's farewell was patronising and affectionate in the extreme. She showered sovereigns around her beneficently, as usual. Salome arose, and was coming forward to shake hands. "I cannot allow you to stir," said her aunt, imperatively, "till you have completed your exercises on the Potential Mood. Say 'Good night, all,' and go on wit your task."

"Good night, all," said Salome, with a quivering voice. Her grandmother, however, kissed her, and bade her farewell with much affection.

"Ah, Mr. Carnforth," said Mrs. Chinfeather, turning to the master, and pressing his slender fingers in her warm, moist palms, "you only want a wife to make you happy. Your habits are charmingly domestic, I am sure. Well, well; if I were only a little younger! But I'll say no more. Good night! Good night! You are a naughty man, I believe."

Standing half-concealed in the shadow of the gateway, at six o'clock the following morning, I saw the mail-coach whirl past in all its splendour. Salome's quick eye discerned me where I stood; and she kissed her hand and gave me a parting smile; and that was the last I saw of her for many a long year.

After her departure I sunk back, by degrees, into my old way of life; though it was a hard trial at first. My rambles in the country became altogether distasteful, now that I had no longer Salome for a companion. Only from books could I still derive some degree of pleasure; and, being debarred from

any change of scene or any variety in the dull routine of my life, I became more attached to them day by day; and day by day I grew prematurely older, and became a man, in mind at least, long before my time.

I drew a likeness of Salome in crayons, though it was not till after several failures that I succeeded in catching the strange beauty of her smile. This portrait I hung in my bedroom, facing the east; so that the earliest rays of the rising sun might fall upon it; and, illumined thus gloriously, I have gazed on it in silence many an hour.

THE BURTHEN LIGHTENED.

God lays his burthen on each back:
But who
What is within the pack
May know?

Low bow'd his head, even lower than was need,
For all his Atlas weight;
Bow'd with men's scorn, and with his own sad head
Of what might be the freight

'Neath which so painfully his being creep'd:
"Was it a heritage,
Growth of his fathers' sins on him upheap'd?
Or his own sinful wage?"

Ask'd he of lawgiver and sage and priest,
Of all the esteem'd and wise;
And gat no answer. Nay! not even the least
From worshipp'd Beauty's eyes.

Not that they spake not. Some said, It was nought,
There was no hump at all;
And some that—It was nothing which he sought—
The why such did befall;

Some laugh'd; and some long visages did pull;
Some knew not what he meant;
But the Beloved was so pitiful
He cursed her as he went.

Some bade him quit vain inquest, and delight
Each sense with pleasant things;
And some swore 'twas the sign that Heaven would blight
His highest imagings;

And some, An operation would remove
The mere excrescent flesh;
While others, Pruning it would only prove
How fast 'twould grow afresh;

And some, who cited law and gospel, laid
New heaviness on his neck;
Let him that hath, have ever more, they said,
And let the wreck'd bear wreck!

Yet after every check, repulse, and scoff,
He ask'd again, again,
What is this burthen? Can none take it off?
Is there no end of pain?

Flung back on his own soul, what he inquired
Was hardly, sadly taught;
With desperate travail he at length acquired
Something of what he sought.

He found there was a meaning: that was much:
He trusted God was Good,
These thoughts made patience earnest; out of such
He earn'd some spirit-food,

And grew: for all the evil hump remain'd,
Like Sindbad's Man o' the Sea:
Only he had no hope to be unchain'd;
How from himself get free?

At last came Time, who from the chrysalis
Brings forth the rainbow'd fly;
Of Time he ask'd, What was this weight of his?
And Time gave full reply.

Time mask'd as Death, yet smiling, did unpack
The worn man's crushing load:
Two wings sprang forth; high o'er the cloudy wrack
The Angel, whom men call'd That Poor Hunchback,
Through farthest heavens rode.

So, looking westward yestereve, I knew
A figure of warm cloud:
A very humpback till his load he threw,
As Lazarus left his shroud.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

I AM ABOARD THE PRUSSIAN EAGLE.

The feeling may be one of pure cockneyism, as puerile as when one sees a ship on the sea for the first time, but I cannot help it; I have a pleasure, almost infantine, when I remind myself that I am no longer performing a trite steam-boat voyage on the Thames, the Seine, the Rhine, the Scheldt, or the Straits of Dover, but that I am in verity journeying on the bosom of the Baltic; that we have left the coast of Denmark far behind; that that low long strip of land yonder cingling the horizon is the Swedish island of Gothland, and that, by to-morrow at daybreak, we may expect to enter the Gulf of Finland.

Dear reader, if you are, as I hope, a lover of the story-books, would not your heart sing, and your soul be gladdened—would not you clap your hands for joy—ay, at fifty years of age, and in High Change, if you were to be told some fine morning that the story-books had come True, every one of them? That a livery-stable keeper's horse in Barbican had that morning put out the eye of a calender, son of a king, with a whisk of his tail; that Mr. Mitchell, of the Zoological Society, had just received a fine roc per Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer; that there were excursions every day from the Waterloo station to the Valley of Diamonds; that Mr. Farrance, of Spring Garden (supposing that eminent pastrycooking firm to have an individual entity), had been sentenced to death for making cream tarts without pepper, but had been respited on the discovery that he was the long-lost prince Mouredden Hassan; that several giants had been slain in Wales by Lieutenant-general Jack; that the Forty Thieves were to be tried at the next session of the Central Criminal Court; that a genii had issued from the smoke of a saucepan at Mr. Simpson's fish ordinary, in Billingsgate; that the Prince of Wales had awakened a beautiful princess, who had been asleep, with all her household, in an enchanted palace in

some woods and forests in the Home Park, Windsor; and that a dwarfish gentleman, by the name of Rumpelstiltskin, had lately had an audience of her most gracious Majesty, and boldly demanded the last of the royal babies as a reward for his services in cutting the Koh-i-noor diamond? Who would not forego a Guildhall banquet for the pleasure of a genuine Barmecide feast? who would not take an express train to Wantley, if he could be certain that the real original dragon, who swallowed up the churches, and the cows, and the people, was to be seen alive there? When I was a little lad, the maps were my story-books. The big marble-paper covered atlas, only to be thumbed on high days and holidays, had greater charms for me than even Fox's Martyrs or the Seven Champions. With this atlas and a paunchy volume with a piecrust cover (was it Brookes' or Maunder's gazetteer?) what romances I wove, what poems I imagined, what castles in the air I built! What household words I made of foreign cities; what subtle knowledge I had of the three Arabias,—Arabia Petra, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix! How I longed for the time when I should be big enough to go to Spain (shall I ever be big enough to make that journey, I wonder?)—what doughty projects I formed against the day when I should be enabled to travel on an elephant in Bengal, and a reindeer in Lapland, and a mule in the Pyrenees, and an ostrich in Kabylia, and a crocodile in Nubia, like Mr. Waterton. But my special storybook was that vast patch on the map of Europe marked Russia. In Europe, quotha! did not Russia stretch far, far into Asia, and farther still into America? I never was satiated with this part of the atlas. There was perpetual winter in Russia, of course. The only means of travelling was on a sledge across the snowy steppes. Packs of wolves invariably followed in pursuit, howling fearfully for prey. The traveller was always provided with a stock of live babies, whom he loved dearer than life itself, but whom he threw out, nevertheless, to the wolves one by one, at half-mile distance or so. Then he threw out his lovely and attached wife (at her own earnest request, I need not say), and then the wolves, intent on a third course, leaped into the sledge, and made an end of him. It used to puzzle me considerably as to how the horses escaped being eaten in the commencement, for the sledge always kept going at a tremendous rate; and I was always in a state of ludicrous uncertainty as to the steppes—what they were made of,—wood, or stone, or turf; whether children ever sat on them with babies in their arms (but the wolves would never have allowed that, surely!); and how many steppes went to a flight. There was attraction enough to me, goodness knows, in the rest of the atlas; in boot-shaped Italy, in Africa, huge and yellow as a pumpkin, and like that esculent, little excavated; in the Red Sea (why did they always colour it peagreen in the map?); but the vasty Russia with its appurtenances, was my great storehouse of romance. The Baltic was a continual wonder to me. How could ships ever get into it when there were the Great and Little Belts, and the Kraken, and the Maelstrom, and the icebergs, and the polar bears to stop the way. Russia (on the map) was one vast and delightful region of mysteries, and adventures, and perilous expeditions; a glorious wonder-land of czars who lived in wooden houses disguised as shipwrights; of Cossacks continually careering on long-maned ponies, and with lances like Maypoles; of grisly bears, sweet-smelling leather, ducks, wolves, palaces of ice, forests, steppes, frozen lakes, caftans, long beards, Kremlins, and Ivan the Terribles. Never mind the knout; never mind the perpetual winter; never mind the passage of the Beresina,—I put Russia down in my juvenile itinerary as a place to be visited, coûte qui coûte, as soon as I was twenty-one. I remember, when I was about half that age, travelling on the top of an omnibus from Mile End to the Bank with a philosophic individual in a red plaid cloak. He told me he had lived ten years in Russia (Rooshia, he pronounced it), and gave me to understand confidentially that the czar ruled his subjects with a rod of iron. I grieved when he departed, though his conversation was but common-place. I followed him half-way up Cornhill, gazing at the red plaid skirts of his cloak flapping in the breeze, and revering him as one who had had vast and wonderful experiences—as a Sindbad the Sailor, multiplied by Marco Polo. O, for my twenty-first birthday, and my aunt's legacy, and hey for Russia!

The birthday and the legacy came and departed—never to return again. I received sentence of imprisonment within three hundred miles of London, accompanied by hard labour for the term of my natural life; and though I was far from forgetting Russia—though a poor Silvio Pellico of a paper stainer—I still cherished, in a secret corner of my heart, a wild plan of escaping from the Spielberg some day, and travelling to my heart's content. Russia faded by degrees into the complexion of a story-book, to be believed in, furtively, but against reason and against hope. And this dreamy, legendary, state of feeling was not a little encouraged by the extraordinary paucity of fact, and the astonishing abundance of fiction to be found in all books I could obtain about Russia. Every traveller seemed to form a conception of the country and people more monstrous and unveracious than his predecessor; and I really think that, but for the war, and the Prisoners at Lewes and the Times Correspondent, I should have ended by acceding to the persuasion that Russia was none other than the Empire of Cockaigne, and the Emperor

Nicholas the legitimate successor of Prester John.

But, now, lo! the story-book has come true! This is real Russian writing on my passport; there are two live Russians playing écarté on the poop, and I am steaming merrily through the real Baltic. We may see the Mirage this evening, the chief mate says, hopefully. We may be among the Ice to-morrow, says weather-worn Captain Smith (not Captain Steffens, he is too prudent to allude to such matters, but another captain —a honorary navigator) ominously. Ice, Mirage, and the Gulf of Finland! Are not these better than a cold day in the Strand, or a steam-boat collision in the Pool?

We are only thirty passengers for Cronstadt, and the Preussischer Adler has ample accommodation for above a hundred. It may not be out of place, however, to remark, that there is an infinitely stronger desire to get out of this favoured empire than to get into it. There have been, even, I am told, some Russians born and bred under the beneficent rule of the autocrat, who, having once escaped from the land of their birth, have been altogether so wanting in patriotic feeling as never to return to it; steadfastly disregarding the invitations—nay, commands—of their government despatches through their chanceries in foreign countries.

In Prussia and Denmark, and in my progress due north, generally, I had observed, when I happened to mention my intention of going to St. Petersburg, a peculiar curiosity to know the purport of my journey thither, quite distinct from official inquisitiveness. My interlocutor would usually ask "whether Monsieur sold?" and when I replied that I did not sell anything, he would parry the question, and inquire "whether Monsieur bought?" Then, on my repudiation of any mercantile calling whatsoever, my questioner would hint that music-masters and tutors were very handsomely paid in Russia. I devoted myself to the instruction, perhaps. No; I did not teach anything; and, on this, my catechist after apparently satisfying himself from my modest appearance, that I was neither an ambassador nor a Secretary of Legation, would shrug up his shoulders and give a low whistle, and me a look which might, with extreme facility, be translated into, "Que diable allez-vous faire dans cette galère?" I have never been in New England; but, from the gauntlet of questions I had to run in Northern Europe, I believe myself qualified, when my time comes, to bear Connecticut with equanimity, and to confute the questionings of Massachusetts without difficulty.

We are thirty passengers, as I have said, and we are commanded by Captain Steffens. Captain Steffens is red of face, blue of gills, black and shiny of hair, high of shirt-collar, and an officer of the royal Prussian navy. He will be Admiral Steffens, I doubt not, in the fulness of time, when the Prussian government has built a vessel large enough for him to hoist his flag in. About a quarter of an hour before we started, I had observed the red face and the high shirt-collar, popping in and out—with Jack-in-the-box celerity—of a little state-room on the deck. I had previously been dull enough to take the first mate, who stood at the gangway, for the commander of the Preussischer Adler, and to admire the tasteful variety of his uniform, composed as it was, of a monkey-jacket with gilt buttons, a sky-blue cap with a gold band, fawn-coloured trowsers, and a Tartan velvet waistcoat of a most distracting liveliness of pattern and colour. But it was only at the last moment that I was undeceived, and was made to confess how obtuse I had been; for, then, the state-room door flying wide open, Captain Steffens was manifest with the thirty passengers' passports in one hand, and a tremendous telescope in the other, and arrayed besides in all the glory of a light-blue frock, a white waistcoat, an astonishing pair of epaulettes of gold bullion ("swabs," I believe, they are termed in nautical parlance), a shirt-frill extending at right angles from his manly breast, like a fan, and patent-leather boots. But why, Captain Steffens, why, did you suffer a navy cap with a gold-laced band to replace the traditional, the martial, the becoming cocked-hat? For, with that telescope, that frill, those epaulettes, that rubicund visage, and that (missing) cocked-hat, Captain Steffens would have looked the very Fetch and counterfeit presentment of the immortal admiral who "came to hear on" the punishment of the faithless William Taylor by the "maiden fair and free" whom he had deserted, and which admiral not only "werry much applauded her for what she had done," but likewise appointed her to the responsible position of first lieutenant "of the gallant Thunderbomb."

But though unprovided with a cocked-hat, Captain Steffens turns out to be a most meritorious commander. He takes off his epaulettes after we have left Swinemunde, and subsides into shoulder-straps; but the long telescope never leaves him, and he seems to have an equal partiality for the thirty passports. He is always conning them over behind funnels, and in dim recesses of the forecastle; and he seems to have a special penchant for perusing mine, and muttering my name over to himself, as if there were something wrong about me, or the famous scrap of paper which has given me so much trouble. I step up to him at last, and request to be permitted to enlighten him on any doubtful point he may descry. He assures me that all is right; but he confesses that passports are the bane of his existence. "Those people yonder," he whispers, motioning with his thumb towards where I supposed in the steamer's course is Cronstadt, "are the very deuce with passports, lieber Herr." And he sits on the pile of passports all dinner

time; and, just before I go to bed, I discover him peeping over them with the chief mate, by the light of the binnacle-lamp, and I will be sworn he has got mine again, holding it up to the light.

Confound those passports! It appears to me that the traveller who has his passport most in accordance with rule and regulation is subject to the most annoyance. At Stettin I had to go to the Russian consul's bureau to procure a certificate of legitimitation to my passport before they would give me my ticket at the steam-packet office. The Muscovite functionary looked at my foreign office document with infinite contempt, and informed me that, being an English one, it was by no means valid in Russia. When I explained to him that it had been visé by his own ambassador at Berlin, he disappeared with it, still looking very dubious, into an adjoining apartment, which, from sundry hangings and mouldings, and the flounces of a silk dress which I espied through the half-opened door, I conjecture to have been the boudoir of Madame la Consulesse. I suppose he showed the passport to his wife, and, enlightened, doubtless, by her superior judgment, he presently returned radiant, saying that the passport was parfaitement en règle, and that it was charmant. I can see him now, holding my passport at arm's length, and examining the Russian visâ through his eyeglass with an air half critical half approving, as if it were some natural curiosity improved by cunning workmanship; and murmuring charmant meanwhile. He seemed so fond of it that it was quite a difficulty for him to give it me back again. He did so at last, together with the legitimitation, which was an illegible scrawl on a scrap of paper like a pawnbroker's duplicate. I think his clerks must have known that my passport was in rule, and charming, for they bestowed quite fraternal glances on me as I went out. To have a passport in regular order seems to be the only thing necessary to be thought great and wise and good in these parts; and, when a virtuous man dies, I wonder they don't engrave on his tombstone that he was a tender father, an attached husband, and that his passport was parfaitement en règle.

I wish that, instead of being thirty passengers, we were only twenty-nine; or, at all events, I devotedly wish that the thirtieth were any other than Captain Smith. He is a sea-captain: what right has he to be in another man's vessel? Where is his ship? He has no right even to the name of Smith—he ought to be Smit, or Schmidt; for he tells me that he was born at Dantzig; that it is only in the fourth generation that he can claim English descent. Indeed, he speaks English fluently enough, but with the accent of a Hottentot. When Captain Smith was an egg, he must indubitably have been selected by that eminent nautical poultry-fancier, Mother Carey, for chicken-hatching purposes, and a full-feathered bird of ill-omen he has grown up to be. He has had a spite against the Preussischer Adler from the outset; and I hear him grumbling to himself or the Baltic Sea—it does not much matter which, for he is always communing with one or the other — somewhat in this fashion:—"Den dousand daler! twenty dousand daler! she gostet tinkering up dis time, and she not worth a tam: no, not one tam;" and so on. He has a camp-stool on which he sits over the engine hatchway, casting baleful glances at the cylinders, and grumbling about the number of dalers they have "gostet," and that they are "not worth a tam." I find him examining a courier's bag I have purchased at Berlin, and evidently summing up its value by the curt but expressive phrase I have ventured to quote. I discover him counting, watch in hand, the number of revolutions per minute of the engines, and muttering disparaging remarks to the steward. He takes a vast quantity of solitary drams from a private bottle; openly declaring that the ship's stores are to be measured by his invariable standard of worthlessness. Sometimes, in right of nautical freemasonry, he mounts the paddlebox bridge, and hovers over Captain Steffens (he is very tall) like an Old Man of the Sea, whispering grim counsel into that commander's ear, till Captain Steffens seems very much inclined to charge at him full butt with his long telescope, or to pitch him bodily into the Baltic. He haunts the deck at unholy hours, carrying a long pair of boots lined with sheepskin, which he incites the cook, with drams from his solitary bottle, to grease, and which he suspends, for seasoning, to forbidden ropes and stays. The subject on which he is especially eloquent is a certain ship—"Schibb" he calls it—laden with madapolams, and by him, at some remote period of time, commanded, and which went down off the island of Oësel, or Oosel, or Weasel, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-nine. He brings a tattered chart of his own on deck (for the ship's charts, he confidentially remarks, are not worth his favourite monosyllable), and shows me the exact spot where the ill-fated vessel came to grief. "Dere I lose my schibb, year 'vorty-nine," he says. "Dere: jost vere my dumb is." (His dumb, or thumb, is a huge excrescence like a leech boiled brown, and with a sable hat, or nail-band.) "Dere de Schön Jungfrau went down. Hans Schwieber was my mate, and de supercargo was a tam tief." This rider to Falconer's Shipwreck, and an interminable narrative about a certain Stevedore of the port of Revel, who had the property of getting drunk on linseed oil, are his two great conversational hobby-horses. It is very easy to see that he predicts a fate similar to that of the Schön Jungfrau for the Preussischer Adler. Prussian sailors, according to him, are good for nothing. He wants to know where Captain Steffens passed his examina-

tion; and he denies the possibility of the vessel steering well, seeing that the Baltic is full of magnetic islands, which cause the needle to fly round to all parts of the compass at once. To aggravate his imperfections, he wears a tall hat, grossly sinning against all the rules of nautical etiquette; and he smokes the biggest and rankest of Hamburg cigars, one of which, like an ill-flavoured sausage, smoulders on the bench by his side all dinner-time. He evidently prefers the company of the second cabin passengers, as a body, to ours; and audibly mutters that the first-class accommodation is not worth—I need not repeat what. Altogether, he is such a baleful, malignant, wet-blanket son of a gun, that I feel myself fast growing mutinous; and his sinister prophecies go on multiplying so rapidly, that I christen him JONAH, and am very much inclined to sign a round-robin, or to head a deputation of the passengers to Captain Steffens, praying that he may be cast into the sea. But where is the fish that would consent to keep such a terrible old bore for three days and nights in its belly?

As, when in a summer afternoon's nap you have been drowsily annoyed, some half-hour durant, by a big blue-bottle, and are suddenly awakened by the sharp agony of a hornet's sting full in the calf of your favourite leg, so, suddenly does the passive annoyance of Captain Smith's evil predictions cede to the active torture of MISS WAPPS's persecution. Miss Wapps, English, travelling alone, and aged forty, has taken it into her fair head to entertain a violent dislike to me, and pursues me with quite a ferocity of antipathy. She is a lean and bony spinster, with a curiously blue-bronzed nose and cheek-bones to match, and a remarkable mole on her chin with a solitary hair growing from it like One Tree Hill at Greenwich. She has a profusion of little ringlets that twist and twine like the serpents of the Furies that had taken to drinking, and had been metamorphosed, as a punishment, into corkscrews. To see her perambulating the decks after they have been newly swabbed, holding up her drapery, and displaying a pair of baggy—well, I suppose there is no harm in the word—pantalettes, and with a great round flap hat surmounting all, she looks ludicrously like an overgrown schoolgirl. She is one of those terrible specimens of humanity who have a preconceived persuasion—a woman who has made up her mind about everything—arts, sciences, laws, learning, commerce, religion, Shakspeare, and the musical-glasses—and nothing can shake, nothing convince, nothing mollify her. Her conclusions are ordinarily unfavourable. She stayed a few hours at the Drei Kronen at Stettin, where I had the advantage of her society, and she made up her mind at a very early stage of our acquaintance that I was an impostor, because I said that I was going to St. Petersburg. "Many persons," she remarked, with intense acerbity, "talk of going to Russia, when they never go further than Gravesend. I am going to St. Petersburg to recover my property, devastated by the late unchristian war." As this seemed a double-barrelled insinuation, implying not only my having stated the thing which was not, but also the unlikelihood of my possessing any property to be devastated or recovered, I began to feel sufficiently uncomfortable, and endeavoured to bring about a better state of feeling, by asking Miss Wapps if I might have the pleasure of helping her to some wine. She overwhelmed me at once with a carboy of vitriolic acid: she never took wine—never! And though she said no more, it was very easy to gather from Miss Wapps's tone and looks that in her eyes the person most likely to rob the Bank of England, go over to the Pope of Rome, and assassinate the Emperor of the French, would be the man who did take wine to his dinner. She flatly contradicted me, too, as to the amount of the fare (which I had just paid) from Stettin to Cronstadt. She had made up her mind that it was one hundred and fifty francs French money, and all the arguments in the world could not bring her to recognise the existence of such things as roubles or thalers. But where she was Samsonically strong against me was on the question of my nationality. As I happen to be rather swart of hue, and a tolerable linguist, she took it into her head at once that I was a foreigner, and addressed me as "Mossoo." In vain did I try to convince her that I was born and bred in London, within the sound of Bow bells. To make the matter worse—it being necessary for me, during one of the endless passport formalities, to answer to my name, which is not very English in sound—it went conclusively to make out a case against me in the mind of Miss Wapps. She called me Mossoo again, but vengefully in sarcastic accents; and complained of the infamy of an honourable English gentlewoman being beset by Jesuits and spies.

On board, Miss Wapps does not bate one atom of her animosity. I have not the fatuity to believe that I am what is usually termed popular with the sex; but as I am, I hope, inoffensive and a good listener, I have been able to retain some desirable female acquaintances: but there is no conciliating Miss Wapps. She is enraged with me for not being sea-sick. She unmistakeably gives me to understand that I am a puppy, because I wear the courier's bag slung by a strap over my shoulder; and when I meekly represent to her that it is very useful for carrying lucifer-matches, a comb, change, Bradshaw, cigars, eau-de-Cologne, a brandy-flask, and such small matters, she gives utterance to a peculiar kind of feminine grunt, something between that of an asthmatic pig and an elderly Wesleyan at a moving part of

the sermon, but which to me plainly means that she hates me, and that she does not believe a word I say. She wants to know what the world is coming to, when men can puff their filthy tobacco under the noses of ladies accustomed to the best society? and when I plead that the deck is the place for smoking, and that all the other gentlemen passengers are doing as I do, she retorts, "More shame for them!" She alludes to the pretty stewardess by the appellation of "hussy," at which I feel vastly moved to strangle her; and she has an abominable air-cushion with a hole in it, which is always choking up hatchways, or tripping up one's legs, or tumbling over cabin-boys' heads like the Chinese cange. As a culmination of injury, she publicly accuses me at dinner of detaining the mustard designedly and of malice aforethought at my end of the table. I am covered with confusion, and endeavour to excuse myself; but she overpowers me with her voice, and Captain Steffens looks severely at me. I have an inward struggle after dinner, as to whether I shall give her a piece of my mind, and so shut her up for ever, or make her an offer of marriage; but I take a middle course, and subside into the French language, which she cannot speak, and in which, therefore, she cannot contradict me. After this, she makes common cause against me with Captain Smith (why didn't she go down in the Schön Jungfrau?); and as they walk the deck together I don't think I am in error in concluding that she is continuing to denounce me as a Jesuit and a spy, and that the captain has imparted to her his opinion that I am "not worth a tam!"

We have another lady passenger in the chief cabin; she is a French lady, and (she makes no disguise at all about the matter) an actress. She is going to Moscow for the coronation, when there are to be grand dramatic doings; but she is coming out thus early to stay with her mamma, also an actress, who has been fifteen years in St. Petersburg. "Imaginez vous," she says, "dans ce trou!" She is very pretty, very coquettish, very good-natured, very witty, and comically ignorant of the commonest things. Captain Steffens loves her like a father already, I can see. Even the grim Captain Smith regards her with the affection of a Dutch uncle. She dresses every morning for the deck, and every afternoon for dinner, with as much care as though she were still on her beloved Boulevard de Gand. Her hair is always smooth, her eyes always bright, her little foot always bien chaussée, her dress always in apple-pie order, her temper always lively, cheerful, amiable. She eats little wings of birds in a delightfully cat-like manner, and chirps, after a glass of champagne, in a manner ravishing to behold. She is all lithe movement, and silver laughter, and roguish sayings. Enfin: she is a Parisienne! What need I say more? She has a dozen of the gentlemen passengers at her feet as soon as she boards the Preussischer Adler, but she bestows her arm for the voyage on Monsieur Alexandre, a fat Frenchman with a beard and a wide-awake hat; who is, I suspect, a traveller for some champagne house at Rheims. He follows her about like a corpulent poodle; he takes care of her baskets, shawls, and furs; he toils up ladders with camp-stools for her; he holds an umbrella over her to shield her from the sun; he cuts the leaves of books for her; he produces for her benefit private stores of chocolate and bon-bons; he sits next to her at dinner, and carves tit-bits for her; he pays for the champagne; he walks the deck with her by moonlight, shielding her from the midnight air with ample pelisses, and rolling his little eyes in his fat face. She is all smiles and amiability to him (as, indeed, to every one else); she allows him to sit at her feet; she gives him to snuff from her vinegarette; she pats his broad back and calls him "Mon bon gros;" she is as familiar with him as if she had known him a quarter of a century; she orders him about like a dog or a black man; but is never cross, never pettish. She will probably give him the tips of her little fingers to kiss when she leaves him at Cronstadt; and, when some day perhaps she meets him by chance on the Nevskoi, she won't know him from Adam.

'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour—I mean, this is always my fate. Somebody else gets the pleasant travelling companions; I get the Miss Wappses. I never fall in love with a pretty girl, but I find she has a sweetheart already, or has been engaged for ten years to her cousin Charles in India, who is coming home by the next ship to marry her. Am I not as good as a wine-merchant's bagman? Never mind; let me console myself with the Russian.

The Russian is a gentleman whose two years' term of travel has expired, and who, not being able to obtain an extension of his leave of absence, and not very desirous of having his estates sequestered, which would be the penalty of disobedience, is returning, distressingly against his own inclination, to Russia, is an individual who looks young enough to be two or three and twenty, and old enough to be two or three and forty. How are you to tell in a gentleman whose hair, without a speck of grey, is always faultlessly brushed, oiled, perfumed, and arranged; whose moustache is lustrous, firm, and black; whose teeth are sound and white; whose face is perfectly smooth, and clear, and clean shaven; who is always perfectly easy, graceful, and self-possessed? The Russian speaks English and French—the first language as you and I, my dear Bob, speak it; the second as our friend, Monsieur Adolphe, from Paris, would speak his native tongue; by which I

mean that the Russian speaks English like an Englishman, and French like a Frenchman, without hesitation, accent, or foreign idiom. He is versed in the literature of both countries, and talks of Sam Weller and Jerome Paturot with equal facility. I am, perhaps, not so well qualified to judge of his proficiency in Italian; but he seems to speak that tongue with at least the same degree of fluency as he converses in German, of which, according to Captain Steffens, he is a master. He laughs when I talk about the special and astounding gift that his countrymen seem to possess for the acquisition of languages. "Gift, my dear fellow," he says, "it is nothing of the kind. I certainly picked up Italian in six months, during a residence in the country; but I could speak French, English, and German long before I could speak Russian. Nous autres gentilhommes Russes, we have English nurses; we have French and Swiss governesses; we have German professors at college. As children and as adults we often pass days and weeks without hearing a word of Russian; and the language with which we have the slightest acquaintance is our own." The Russian and I soon grow to be great (travelling) friends. He talks, and seems to be well informed, on everybody and everything, and speaks about government and dynasties in precisely the same tone of easy persiflage in which he discusses the Italian opera and the ballet. He tells me a great deal about the Greek church; but it is easy to see that matters ecclesiastical don't trouble "nous autres gentilhommes Russes" much. He has been in the army, like the vast majority of his order, and is learned in horses, dogs, and general sportsmanship; a branch of knowledge that clashes strangely with his grassaillóing Parisian accent. He proposes écarté in an interval of chat; but finding that I am but a poor cardplayer, he shows me a few tricks on the cards sufficient to set a moderately ambitious wizard up in business on the spot, and contentedly relinquishes the pack for the pianoforte, on which he executes such brilliant voluntaries, that I can see the hard-favoured visage of Miss Wapps gazing down at us through the saloon skylight in discontented admiration — that decisive lady marvelling doubtless how such an accomplished Russian can condescend to waste his time and talents on such a trumpery mortal as I am. He shows me an album bound in green velvet, and with his cypher and coronet embroidered in rubies thereupon, and filled with drawings of his own execution. He rolls paper cigarettes with the dexterity of a Castilian caballero; and he has the most varied and exact statistical knowledge on all sorts of topics, political, social, agricultural, and literary, of any man I ever met with. And this is, believe me, as ordinary and everyday-to-be-found specimen of the Russian gentleman as the unlettered, unlicked, uncouth, untravelled John Smith one meets at a Boulogne boarding-house is of an English esquire. My friend, the Russian, has his little peculiarities; without being in the slightest degree grave or sententious that facile mouth of his is never curved into a genuine smile; those dark grey eyes of his never look you in the face; he seems never tired of drinking champagne, and never in the least flushed thereby; and, finally and above all, I never hear him express an opinion that any human thing is right or wrong. If he have an opinion on any subject, and he converses on almost all topics, it is not on board the Preussischer Adler, or to me, that he will impart it. With his handsome face and graceful carriage, and varied parts, this is the sort of man whom nine women out of ten would fall desperately in love with at first sight; yet he drops a witty anecdote or so about the sex, that makes me start and say, Heaven help the woman who ever falls in love with him!

It may have struck my reader, that beyond alluding to the bare fact of being on the Baltic, and in a fair way for Cronstadt, I have said little or nothing as yet concerning our actual voyage. In the first place, there is but little marine to be chronicled; for from Saturday at noon, when we started, to this present Monday evening we have had uninterrupted fair weather and smooth water; and are gliding along as on a lake. And, in the second place, I generally shy the sea as much as I can. I hate it. I have a dread for it as Mrs. Hemans had. To me it is simply a monster, cruel, capricious, remorseless, rapacious, insatiable, deceitful; sullenly unwilling to disgorge its treasures; mockingly refusing to give up its dead. But it must, and shall, some day: the sea. If anything could reconcile me, however, to that baseless highway, it would be the days and nights we have had since Saturday. It is never dark, and the moon, beautiful as she is, is almost an intruder, so long does the sun lord it over the heavens, so short are his slumbers (it is not far from the time and place where he rises at midnight*), so gloriously strong and fresh does he come up to his work again in the morning. And the white ships that glide on the tranquil sea, far far away towards the immensity of the horizon, are as augurs of peace and hope to me; and the very smoke from the boat's funnel that was black and choky at Stettin, is now, in the undying sun, all gorgeous in purple and orange as it rolls forth in clouds that wander purposely through the empty sky, till the sea-birds meet them, and break them into fragments with their sharp-sected wings.

There is a very merry party forward, in the second cabin. Among them is a humorous character from the south of France, who is going to Russia to superintend a sugar manu-

* At Tornea, in Sweden, on the twenty-first of June.

factory belonging to some Russian seigneur. He has been established by common consent chief wag and joke-master in ordinary to the Prussian Eagle. I hear shouts of laughter from where he holds his merry court long after I am snug in my berth; and the steward retails his latest witticisms to us at dinner, hot and hot, between the courses. He lives at free quarters, for his jests' sakes, in the way of wines, spirits, and cigars; and I don't think the steward can have the heart to take any money of him for fees or extras at the voyage's end. "Qu'il est gai!" says the French actress, admiringly. As a wag he must, of course, have a butt: and he has fixed on a little, snuffy, old Frenchwoman, with a red cotton pocket-handkerchief tied round her head, who, with a large basket, a larger umbrella, and no other perceptible luggage, started up suddenly at Stettin. She has got a passport with Count Orloff's own signature appended to it, and does not seem to mind the Russians a bit. Who can she be? The Czar's fostermother, perhaps. The funny Frenchman (who never saw her before in his life) now calls her "maman," now assumes to be madly in love with her, to the infinite merriment of the other passengers; but she repulses his advances with the utmost good humour, and evidently considers him to be a wag of the first water. Many of this good fellow's jokes are of a slightly practical nature, and would, in phlegmatic English society, probably lead to his being kicked by somebody; but to me they are all amply redeemed by his imperturbable good humour, and his frank, hearty laughter. Besides, he won my heart in the very commencement by making a face behind Miss Wapps's back so supernaturally comic, so irresistibly ludicrous, that Grimaldi, had he known him, would have been jaundiced with envy. The great Captain Steffens favours this jovial blade, and unbends to him, they say, more than he has ever been known to do to mortal second-cabin passenger.

The ill-boding Captain Smith came to my berth last night, with a rattlesnake-like smile, to tell me we were off Hango Head (a fit place for such a raven to herald), and to refresh my memory about the ice; and here, sure enough, this Tuesday morning, we are in the very thick of floating masses of the frozen sea! Green, transparent, and assuming every kind of weird and fantastic shapes, they hem the Preussischer Adler round, cracking and groaning "like noises in a swound," as the Ancient Mariner heard them. Warm and balmy as the May air was yesternight, it is now piercing cold; and I walk the deck a very moving bale of furs, which the courteous Russian has insisted on lending me. We are obliged to move with extreme caution and slowness, stopping altogether from time to time; but the ice gradually lessens, gradually disappears; the shores of the Gulf keep gradually becoming more distinct; and, on the Russian side, I can see white houses and the posts of the telegraph.

About noon on Tuesday, the twentieth of May, turning at the gangway to walk towards the steamer's head, I see a sight that does my eyes good. I have the advantage of being extremely short-sighted, and a view does not grow, but starts upon me. And now, all fresh and blue, and white, and sparkling and dancing in the sunlight I see a scene that Mr. Stanfield might paint—a grove of masts, domes and steeples, and factory chimneys; a myriad of trim yachts and smaller craft, and, dotting the bright blue water like the Seven Castles of the Devil, with tier above tier of embrasures bristling with cannon, the granite forts of the impregnable Cronstadt. There is a big guard-ship behind us, and forts and guns on every side, and I feel that I am in for it.

"Lads, sharpen your cutlasses," was the signal of the Admiral who didn't breakfast in Cronstadt and dine in St. Petersburg. Let me put a fresh nib to my goosequill, and see what I can do, in my humble way, to make some little impression on those granite walls.

AN INDIAN COURT CIRCULAR.

The Court Circular in general is dreary reading; exceptions, however, are possible. For instance, the daily doings, dressings, and dinings of Pharaoh, Semiramis, Alexander, or Charlemagne, would now be full of interest. Another state and its sovereign have just passed away into the distant realms of ancient history; but before it is utterly vanished into vapour and shrouded from view behind the veil of the past, we will make use of one of the Messrs. Routledge's publications, The Private Life of an Eastern King, to show what a Court Circular would and must have been, if given by the journals of the kingdom Oude,—(which pronounce as if it rhymed with "proud.")

It is as well to premise that Lucknow itself is an eccentric city. It is impossible to tell where it begins and where it ends. There are no walls to mark its limits, and as you approach, it is always seen commencing and leaving off again, and what promises to be the city itself is always turning out to be an undecided suburb. Then there are palaces, where nothing is palatial, and an army which can do most things except fight; there are books of royalty, which their owner cannot read, and courtiers of royalty whom their master cannot control. But foremost amongst Oriental show-things is always a tomb. That of the un-present king's grandfather resembles a bazaar—that is to say, an English bazaar; and so obviously do the numberless objects thus incongruously thrown together in honour of the deceased monarch seem intended for sale, that the royal umbrella is exposed to insult, by the temptation to ask the price of

some of them. There are Indian fans which are never in motion, and French clocks which keep miscellaneous time; European chandeliers placed conveniently upon the floor, and wall-shades perched pleasantly in the middle of the hall;—bits of Birmingham machinery which, like the donkey in the ballad, decidedly 'wouldn't go,' and swords of all nations, which, like the legitimate drama at home, seem as if they wouldn't 'draw;'—bootjacks of a scientific kind, which are admirably adapted for catching the leg of the operator, like a man-trap;—a copy of Frank Stone's 'Last Appeal,' with 'lot two hundred and ninety-six,' on a square ticket in the corner, and ditto of Frank Stone's 'Heart's Misgivings,' with an ancient inscription appended to it, informing the public that it might at one time have been had for the sum of sixteen rupees;—more French clocks with mirrors; more French clocks with pictures; and more French clocks, with wooden shepherds, more or less influenced by machinery, and who look after their sheep in a spasmodic manner, whenever the hour — always the wrong one — condescends to strike. Then comes, or rather next stands—an effigy—warranted correct—of the Borak on which Mahommed was carried to Heaven. He is the full size of life, but here the resemblance to anything living or breathing ends; a happy arrangement which obviates all theological discussions as to the propriety of imitating living things. Indeed, all such effigies in this orthodox building are of objects which must be altogether incomprehensible to gods or men. Next comes a patent knife-grinding machine, and by the side of it a wooden horse, marked 'Manby and Co., carver and gilder, Calcutta.' A warming-pan is one of the most conspicuous objects. These various properties are contained in a solemn Temple of the Dead; which is located by the side of a stone marked by the footprint of Mahommed. But the Sepulchral Museum must not detain us too long from producing the promised Court Circular.

Yesterday—or to-morrow, for it is all one now—His Majesty Nassir-u-deen Hyder, the asylum and refuge of the universe, was attended as usual, about twelve o'clock, by Sofraz Khan, "the illustrious chief," the title of nobility bestowed by his majesty on the European barber who dresses his hair. After the ceremony, the English tutor—who was employed to teach his native language to the king, for the moderate consideration of something like fifteen hundred pounds a-year—was admitted.

"Now, master"—(his majesty always calls his tutor "master")—"now, master, we will begin in earnest."

The tutor read a passage from the Spectator, and the king read it after him. The tutor began to read again.

"Boppery bopp!"—(a native exclamation equivalent to, Oh, dear me!)—"Boppery bopp, but this is dry work!" his majesty exclaimed, stretching himself, when it came to his turn to read once more. "Let us have a glass of wine, master."

The glass of wine led to conversation, the books were pushed away, and the lesson ended after having occupied full ten minutes.

Surgeon Jones, one of the king's aides-de-camp appointed by the British resident, and whom the king delights not to honour, had the honour of being introduced.

"Jones," said his majesty, "will you play me a game of draughts?"

"With great pleasure. I shall be honoured in playing with your majesty," was Jones's reply.

"For a hundred gold mohurs—a hundred and sixty pounds sterling," said the king.

"I cannot afford to play for a hundred gold mohurs, your majesty; I am but a poor man."

"Master," said the king, turning quickly round to the tutor, "will you play me at draughts for a hundred gold mohurs?"

"Your majesty honours me; I shall be delighted."

The board was brought—the men were placed—the game was commenced. The tutor was an excellent chess and draughts player; but this morning, although the king played badly, the tutor played worse. While the tutor was playing so wretchedly, in spite of striving to do his best, the barber engaged the king's opponent in conversation, and his majesty slily took advantage of the opportunity to alter the position of some of the pieces on the board. The game was finished. The tutor was beaten.

"You owe me a hundred gold mohura," said triumphant majesty.

"I do, your majesty; I shall bring them this evening."

"Don't forget," was Majesty's reply, as he walked off to the billiard-table, where he won again, as he invariably does, although it is no easy matter to manage it adroitly. But the necessary and useful friend was ready at hand, to touch the balls slily occasionally, always in favour of the king and against his adversary,—now to keep one ball from the pocket, and now to send another erring one into it. It is the etiquette not to beat his majesty in anything.

The royal and European party then proceeded to the large walled-in garden, where animal fights often take place, and which is some three or four acres in extent. No native attendant is admitted within its precincts whilst the Western strangers are there with the king. Either some one had been describing the game of leap-frog to his majesty, or else he had seen some pictures of it; but it had taken his fancy mightily. The natives had been left, as usual, without the garden, the heavy gates were swung to, and majesty commanded that the sport should forthwith begin. The captain of the

body-guard made a back for the tutor; the librarian stood for the portrait-painter. Away went the high and mighty personages, like schoolboys, beginning with very low backs—for none of them were very expert in the game—but gradually making backs higher and higher. The noble quintett found it rather hot work. The king did not long stand a quiet spectator of the scene; he determined to try too. His majesty, as his dutiful and undutiful subjects are aware, is very thin, and not over strong. The librarian happened to be nearest to him at the time; and he ran towards him, calling out. The librarian loyally made a back, and the sportive sovereign went over easily enough; being very light, and a good horseman, he succeeded in the vault without difficulty. The king then stood for the librarian, who would have given a good deal to have been excused; but his majesty would have it so, and to have refused would have given mortal offence. The librarian ran, and vaulted; down went the back, and down went the vaulter with it. His majesty and the guardian of the Oudean manuscripts went rolling together amongst the flower-beds. The king got up, a little annoyed, exclaiming, "Boppery bopp, you are as heavy as an elephant!" The librarian feared his royal master would be in a passion; but, magnanimously, he was not at all. The barber adroitly made a back for him forthwith, and over he went blithely. The lightest of the august party was not far off; and the king made a back for him, and succeeded in getting him safely over, without accident or breakage. It was then all right. Away they went, vaulting and standing, round and round, until majesty was tired out, and wanted iced claret to cool him.

To leap-frog succeeded a game of snowballs, which was induced by the following train of reasoning: Christmas-time is just past. Christmas is called in India the great day of the sahebs, and became the subject of deliberation and debate by the king in council. Christmas sports led to a description of what winter was; winter led to snow; snow, to snowballing. The privy-councillors described to his majesty the art and pastime of snow-balling, as well as they could. To a royal inquirer who has never seen snow, it is not very easy to describe it vividly. To aid the elucidation, the king's garden abounds with a large yellow flower, the African marigold, the smaller varieties of which are used to ornament houses in Calcutta at Christmas-time. It is not quite so large as a dahlia, but somewhat similar in form and appearance. When the snow-balling had been described to the king as well as his instructors and advisers could describe it, he pulled three or four of these yellow flowers, and threw them at the librarian, who happened to be the most distant of the party. The good courtiers all followed the royal example; and soon every one was pelting right and left. The yellow flowers served as snowballs, and the whole of the select assembly entered into the game with hearty good-will. The king bore his share in the combat right royally, discharging three missiles for one that was aimed at him. He laughed, and enjoyed the sport amazingly. Before concluding, the combatants were all a mass of yellow leaves; they stuck in the hair and clothes, and on the king's London hat, in a most tenacious way. It was a delightful result that the king was amused; he had found out a new pleasure, which he proposes to enjoy as long as those yellow flowers continue in bloom. The gardeners afterwards set the garden to-rights again.

While his majesty was reposing after the afternoon's exertions, the nawab, or prime minister and commander of the forces, Rooshun-u-Dowlah, and the general at the head of the police, Rajah Buktawri Singh by name, were admitted to an audience by his majesty, respecting a point of etiquette. The real ground of their complaint was, that the favour and intimacy which the European members of the household enjoy, are by no means pleasing to the higher native nobility of Oude—nay, are altogether displeasing. When the illustrious barber was by, the Indian grandees were but secondary beings.

The barber, who is also park-ranger and head of the menagerie, being admitted to present his monthly bill to his majesty, entered with a roll of paper in his hand. At Lucknow, and in India generally, long documents, legal and commercial, are usually written, not in books, or on successive sheets, but on a long scroll, strip being joined to strip for that purpose, and the whole rolled up like a map.

"Ha, khan!" said the king, observing him; "the monthly bill, is it?"

"It is, your majesty," was the smiling reply.

"Come, out with it. Let us see the extent. Unroll it, khan."

The king was in a playful humour; and the barber was always in the same mood as the king. He held the end of the roll in his hand, and threw the rest along the floor, allowing it to unroll itself as it retreated. It reached to the other side of the long apartment, a goodly array of items and figures, closely written too. The king wanted it measured. A measure was brought, and the bill was found to be four yards and a-half long. The amount was upwards of ninety thousand rupees, or upwards of nine thousand pounds. The king looked at the total, and said, as he did so, "Larger than usual, khan."

"Yes, your majesty; the plate, the new elephants, the chandeliers, the rhinoceroses, the—"

"Oh, it's all right, I know," said the king,

interrupting him. "Take it to the nawab, and tell him to pay it."

"The khan is robbing your majesty," whispered an influential courtier; "his bills are exorbitant."

"If I choose to make the khan a rich man, is that anything to you—to any of you? I know his bills are exorbitant. Let them be so; it is my pleasure. He shall be rich," was the king's indignant answer.

Dinner was served at nine o'clock, the usual dinner-hour in the palace, in the private dining-room. According to the account of an Agrarian reporter, the visitor enters the residence of the Brother of the Sun in the European manner, by the door, the windows being placed too high for the purpose. He next finds himself—or rather loses himself—in a hall of ludicrously large dimensions, which he abandons for a staircase absurdly small. Having carefully fallen up this contrivance, he emerges, with a crushed crown, whitened elbows, and an intelligent appreciation, into the throne-room, where, for the first time, he is able to view the government of Oude in its proper light. The truth flashes upon him for the first time. The world of Oude is a stage, and its king and ministers merely players. Nothing could give one a more lively reminder of the coulisses of a theatre than this same throne-room. There is the same gorgeousness tempered by gloom; the same grimy glitter, dazzling dirt, and delicate effects which will not bear inspection. You can scarcely put the small end of your cheeroot (even if the lord-chamberlain would allow you) between the jewels with which the throne is covered; and yet this same throne is not nearly so splendid as those from which burlesque kings make puns any night at the Lyceum Theatre. The jewels have a Brummagem look, and may be strongly suspected to be no better than they should be. The general furniture too of the place—or rather the particular furniture, for the upholstery is exceptional—is all in too admirable keeping to be otherwise than absurd. It seems to have got there by accident, and to remain because it was nobody's business to put it out of the way; just as you see a couch or an arm-chair behind the scenes of a theatre, in company with a mossy bank, and the diminutive bit of a cottage, beneath the window of which the lover with weak legs serenades the lady with strong affections.

The army materially heightened the theatrical aspect of the place. The men were all stage-soldiers, as far as their difference of age, height, arms, dress and discipline is concerned. They manifested the same fear of getting into anybody's way which we notice in all dramatic corps, the same dismal consciousness that they are only supernumeraries, and that, although they may be compelled some day to go through a few forms of hostility, they were obliged to perform their parts respectfully, and not forget their own humble position. As far as seediness and tatters go, they were on a par, perhaps, with the army of King Richard the Third, after a long strolling campaign, and some five hundred performances in barns and booths; but they exceeded these hardy veterans in some respects.

A little before nine, his majesty made his appearance in the ante-room, where his guests were waiting, leaning on the arm of his favourite, the barber, and ushered by the foremost of the native officials, the lord-chamberlain, with his silver staff of office—the instrument with which he sticks at nothing in the management of his master's affairs. He has a subordinate (everybody in the East has a subordinate), whose chief peculiarity is a complicated incentive to risibility, a remarkable turban, invented by his enlightened sovereign for the amusement of the Europeans, in whom he so highly delights. His majesty was dressed in a plain black English suit, with a dress coat, a black silk neck-tie, and patent-leather boots. The world knows that his majesty was a gentlemanly-looking man, remarkable for a certain kingly grace, and for the pleasing expression of his very light sepia-tinted countenance. His black hair, whiskers, and moustaches contrasted well with the colour of his cheeks, and set off a pair of black piercing eyes, small and keen. He was thin, and of the middle height, much taller than his friend the barber, who was muscular and healthy-looking, making up in breadth what he wants in stature. The barber wore outward habiliments exactly similar to those of his patron. The first remark his majesty made was addressed to the tutor:

"Well, master, have you brought the gold mohurs?"

"I have, your majesty; they are below in my palanquin. Shall I bring them here?"

"Nonsense, master, keep them. Send them home again. Do you think I want your money? Jones thought I wanted his. Did you see how I made the pig eat dirt? Wallah, but I hate him!"

The scene in the dining-room, as the royal party took their places at the table, was a mixture of occidental comforts and oriental display. The king was seated in a gilt arm-chair, raised a few inches above the level of the floor. He occupied the middle of one side of the table, and his guests sat on either hand. The opposite side of the table was left unoccupied, partly for the convenience of the servants when removing and placing dishes on the table, but chiefly that his majesty might see without difficulty whatever entertainments there were for the evening's amusement. As soon as the company had taken their seats, half a dozen female attendants, richly dressed and distinguished for their beauty, came from behind a gauze curtain or screen which occupies one end of the room. It is contrary to Lucknow etiquette to gaze upon these ladies too curiously.

Their office is to wave fans made of peacocks' feathers, backwards and forwards gently over the king. They took their station noiselessly behind the king's chair. He made no remark. No one seemed to regard them at all. It was the ordinary routine of the dinner-table. They plied their graceful task silently and monotonously the whole evening, fanning, and attending to the king's hookah by turns, relieving each other in regular succession, until his majesty was assisted from the table into his harem. The cookery was excellent; soup, fish, joints, curry and rice, pastry, and dessert. The wines were claret, Madeira, and champagne, all of excellent quality, and rendered more delicious by being iced previously. The dessert was composed of the richest and most luscious fruits that tropical luxuriance can produce. With the dessert, the evening's amusements began. Some tumblers exhibited their calisthenic feats—men who appeared to have no bones in their bodies, but could tie themselves up in knots, walk any way but that in which Nature intended, outdo the monkey in monkey-like tricks, and go away well pleased if people laughed at them. Then the court-jesters had a keen encounter of wits, accompanied with arrant buffoonery, not unlike the performances of harlequin and pantaloon and clown in English pantomimes. And then, some conjurors exhibited their feats of devilry and snake-charming. The nautch-girls exhibited their fine figures in graceful attitudes, advancing and retiring, now with one hand held over the head, now with the other. Their faces were not so captivating as those of the female attendants behind his majesty; but their forms were perfectly moulded, and they managed their limbs with a graceful dexterity not to be surpassed. Attendant musicians played upon a species of lute and tamborine behind them, advancing and retreating with them, and accompanying the instruments with their voices. The instrumental was the leading part of the musical performance—the voice accompanied it, rather than it the voice. The Cashmere nautch-girl, Nuna, of whom the king had lately been so doatingly fond, was present, after a week's absence, occasioned by some native holidays. At her re-appearance, she looked, and sang, and danced, as well as ever.

"Boppery bopp!" exclaimed his majesty, yawning as he gazed at her, "but she wearies me. Is there no other amusement this evening! Let us have a quail-fight or a cock-fight, khan barber."

The barber rose to order the quails and the cocks. The king looked at Nuna with languid satiety.

"I wonder how she would look in a European dress," he observed, half to himself, half to the tutor, who sat next him. No one replied. The barber re-appeared, and the king made the same observation to him.

"Nothing is easier, sire, than to see how she would look," was the barber's reply.

A gown and other articles of European female attire were sent for from the barber's house, he being a married man; and when they were brought Nuna was told to retire and put them on. The quails came, and the fight proceeded on the table until the turn of the rival cocks should arrive. Nuna re-appeared in her new costume. A more wretched transformation it is hardly possible to conceive. The clothes hung loosely about her. She felt that she was ridiculous. All grace was gone: all beauty was hidden. She took her place again with a disheartened look. The king and the barber laughed heartily at her plight, whilst hot scalding tears coursed down Nuna's cheeks. The attendant females had no pity for her; but chuckled at her disgrace, turning up their pretty lips.

The revel proceeded; songs were sung. His majesty became gradually more and more affected with the wine he had taken, until his consciousness was almost gone. He was then assisted by the female attendants and two sturdy eunuchs, and so led off to the harem. It was astonishing how like a drunken king looked, to an ordinary drunken mortal. The guests rose from table, and wandered about the palace. It was all open to them except the sleeping apartments; before which, as usual, the native female sepoys, with muskets at their shoulders, paced noiselessly. All was silent and deserted; a native servant here and there, with his clothes wrapped round him—head, feet, and all, bandaged up—lay on a mat asleep, not to be awoke by any amount of noise.

And so ends our abstract of the edifying manner in which one day was employed by King Nassir-u-deen Hyder, at the Court of Lucknow. Many other days might be sketched, that were similarly and yet diversely occupied. Nassir was succeeded on the throne by one of his uncles, a cripple, whom he had repeatedly ill-treated and insulted grossly. The son of that uncle is the king who is now dethroned, and who quitted Lucknow on the thirteenth of March last (without eliciting one expression of regret from his subjects) to commence his journey to England. His mother and brother are already in London to sue for compensation for the loss of the Augean stable, which the British Hercules has cleansed.

If Lucknow has lost in splendour, it has certainly gained in purity. For much more that is startling and wonderful than we have related respecting it, the curious reader must consult the strange but truthful pages of "The Private Life of an Eastern King."

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HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

THE Misses Thompson, whose select establishment for young ladies occupies a trim suburban villa, its garden separated by lance-headed railings from the turmoil of the world, and its windows screened by green jalousies from the glances of eyes masculine, —whose system is supported by numerous testimonials from parents and the clergy (the last named body being of course inspired by a divine afflatus on all educational matters), and whose study it is to combine the discipline of a school with the comforts, elegances, and affections of a home,—the Misses Thompson will exclaim to one another, Health and Education! What unconnected subjects.

Taken separately, however, the words are familiar to these ladies. They believe devoutly that education has been, and still is, the business of their lives; and they know that health is a blessing of which they have long despaired. Miss Thompson, especially, is a sad dyspeptic; and it is well for her pupils if heightened rubicundity of nose, or increased sallowness of skin, gives timely warning of unusual gastric irritation. Dear Mr. Pestle often assures her that the heavy responsibilities of her anxious and arduous position are the sole causes of her ailments, causes beyond even his skill to remove; and that she must resign herself to a palliative treatment guided by his perfect knowledge of her constitution—to an occasional blue pill, and to a subsequent course of stomachic draughts. Dear Mr. Pestle also keeps his eye upon the dear girls, supplying steel mixtures to Miss Fanny, throwing in quinine to Miss Louisa, and suggesting cod-liver oil for Miss Jane. Little Annette, the East Indian, is well known to be a delicate plant; and for her Mr. Pestle recommends mutton chop dinners, and a luncheon at eleven, consisting of three-fourths of the yolk of a large egg beaten up with two-thirds of a small wine-glassful of sherry, and accompanied by three strips of stale bread, toasted upon one side. Mr. Pestle does not say that the dear girls sleep, work, and play in crowded and ill-ventilated rooms; that their exercise is bad in kind and insufficient in amount; or that the mental work exacted from them, although seldom conducive to real intellectual growth, is often more than a growing brain can perform with safety. He knows perfectly that on all these subjects his clients will follow their own devices; he knows that any uncalled-for and hyper-conscientious interference might transfer the school to the visiting list of some less scrupulous neighbour; and he perhaps reflects, being human, that too much health in the world will not conduce to the prosperity of doctors. If his best patients choose so to act that they require his services, why should he, who is not consulted until after the mischief is done, stand obstinately in his own light?

Mr. Pestle is a shrewd and capable man; and a conviction springing from his earliest professional experience has grown and strengthened with his grey hairs. He has found that patients consider truth to be of all pills the least palatable, and the one that requires the thickest gilding. He has therefore formed a habit of obtaining obedience from the sick, and from those around them, by couching his precepts in a form that shall harmonise with their prejudices. A little tact, a little management, a ready assent to some monstrous proposition, has often saved him a world of trouble, and has enabled him to escape the silly questions of a captious valetudinarian. But, if we can separate his medical from his worldly knowledge, and render him temporarily forgetful of the necessity of pleasing Miss Thompson—if we can persuade him to produce for our benefit the results of his observations, we shall find him possessing a profound conviction that that lady's establishment needs reformation in many important particulars. He will say that—not to mention sins against knowledge committed for the sake of cheapness—Miss Thompson and her assistants do not discriminate between teaching and education; or, if they discriminate, elect the former as their idol, and pay adoration to the calf they have set up. Uninformed, not only of the philosophy, but of the very mechanism of the mind, they neither know how to guide its growth or to control its operations. The ardent religious emotions of the young are regulated and directed by questions upon the generations of Abraham, or the longevity of the patriarchs; the intellect is set to thrive upon French and German verbs; and the

memory is assiduously cultivated to procure present remembrance, without regard to the method or the permanence of recollection. The feelings that most adorn and beautify the female character—that sanctify, in all hearts not brutal, the social relations of woman, are left to struggle to maturity as they may; and the girl's probable future is ignored, until the arrival of a child's valentine, or the second chance meeting with a hobbarddehoy, is invested with the romance of an adventure and with the gravity of a crime. An explanation of all this, Mr. Pestle thinks, is to be found in the fact that parents trust to the presumed skill of teachers, and accept superficial acquirements as a criterion of success. To obtain them in the easiest and cheapest way becomes the object of competing schools, with reference only to the fallacious test adopted by the public. Before the true test is applied by the events of life, time and circumstances have obscured the links between the child and the adult. The religion that produces no humility and affords no support, the uncontrolled impulses and feelings that work so much misery in the world, the intellects that are inadequate to simple duties—all these are familiar to those who look for them. How far they depend upon the inherent weaknesses of human nature—how far upon defective early training, is a question that does not admit of precise determination. As long, however, as early training is visibly defective, such results may be expected from its short-comings, and may, in some measure at least, be ascribed to them. As long as schools can be improved, the time for calling upon Hercules has not yet come.

That girls' schools are susceptible of improvement, we imagine few grown-up women, who have had experience of them, will be found to deny. The scholastic profession, like some others, needs a stimulus from without. Necessarily guided by empiricism in bygone times, its members are unwilling to recognise a more safe foundation for their art. Grinding on, year after year, in the same weary circle of monotonous routine, they are dazzled by the light which science would throw upon their track. For, indeed, through examination of the principles which have been found to govern the development of the human body, and the gradual unfolding of the faculties of the human mind, a true educational law may be laid down,—a law adapted alike to masses and to individuals, providing for the exceptional cases to which it points, limited to no system, working by no narrow rule, but requiring intelligent action from those who would utilise its vast simplicity. From it springs the necessity for coupling health with education. It repudiates that tripartite division of the human creature in which so many seem practically to believe, and which assigns the soul to the minister, the mind to the teacher, and leaves only the body to the physician. It teaches that these portions of the whole are too intimately blended in their workings to be separated by human ken, and that none of them can be disregarded in dealing with the others. It teaches that the visible evidences of mind, and the means of influencing them through outward agencies, are entirely dependent upon the integrity of the brain—the organ which materialists deem to be the source, and spiritualists the instrument, of the higher faculties. The integrity of the brain is equally dependent upon the welfare of the body, or, in other words, upon health; and whatever deranges or destroys health, will disturb or pervert the intellectual operations. Moreover, the brain, like any other member of the system, requires food, rest, and regular employment of all its powers, in order to its symmetrical and healthy growth. Through failure in the last respect—an event lamentably common—we may recognise a sort of mental distortion, or one-sided growth, which must always curtail usefulness, and which often predisposes to insanity. To overload the memory, for instance, while the power of reflection remains dormant and unexercised, is to copy the faquir, who stands upon one leg until the other is useless and inert.

Our present knowledge of the laws of health and growth being the result of patient inquiries extended over many years—inquiries of which the earlier results are pretty generally known, while those last attained are, as yet, more or less confined to their enunciators—it follows, almost of necessity, that in a school conducted upon the good old plan there are some practices that everybody knows to be wrong, and some—perhaps equally hurtful—that many persons would defend. The first class have, generally speaking, direct reference to the bodily welfare of the pupils, and include matters of diet, temperature, ventilation, and various domestic regulations. Abuses in these things are often traceable, as we have already hinted, to a desire for improper cheapness—that modern Moloch whose worship causes our sons and our daughters to pass through the fire indeed. Teachers practise, and parents tacitly sanction, what they well know to be wrong—each individual expecting to escape a penalty of which the payment is not quite certain. Reform is only to be hoped for through a general conviction that all tampering with health is bad economy, and will cost money in the end. Even then the present would often outweigh the future, on the principle laid down by sanitary reformers. People, they say, will only take proper care for the preservation of their bodies when they extend the same foresight to their souls. A conviction of the general hopelessness of the case induces us to be content with a single illustration of these mal-practices, and to select the one that is perhaps easiest of remedy. Where girls sleep eight or ten in a small room, a change

would require a new house or a reduction in the number of pupils—sweeping alterations which might not prosper, and which, we are pretty sure, Miss Thompson will not, at present, carry into effect.

The illustration will be found in the very common, perhaps universal custom, of furnishing a school with stools and forms in lieu of ordinary chairs. This is a direct sacrifice of health to parsimony. The stools cost little, and are conveniently moved from one room to another. All mistresses know, however, that the spine of a growing girl is unable to support constantly the weight of her head and shoulders. Nature teaches leaning as a means of relief, by which the weight is lessened, and the free action of the chest not impeded. But a girl who sits on a stool cannot lean, and her spine bends. The resulting deformity may be permanent or temporary; an abiding curvature to one or other side, or a mere rounding of the back removable at will. But all such distortions, while they last, if only for five minutes, have a bad effect that is commonly forgotten. They confine the chest and hinder respiration, limiting the quantity of air admitted into the lungs, and producing effects similar to those of a vitiated atmosphere. This is no light thing. To place a girl in such a position, for several hours daily, that her chest cannot expand with freedom, is to subject her to a kind of slow poisoning. Those who have narrow chests become, under such treatment, pallid and listless, their hearts beat violently on exertion, and they are rendered dangerously prone to lung diseases. The majority show little amiss, and Miss Thompson speaks of the excellent health of the girls under her care. But to all of them a little mischief is done every day, their standard of health is lowered, and their power to resist hurtful influences is diminished. Schoolmistresses cannot be ignorant that they do wrong in using these stools, but they seldom know how wrong: they believe, perhaps, that the evil cannot be great, as the public appear neither to perceive it, nor to apply any pressure for its removal. Many ladies are content if their pupils escape being permanently crooked, not reflecting that the last straw is required to break even the camel's back. Young ladies will forgive us the implied analogy, when they remember that all backs are the handiwork of one Great Artificer.

School-keeping is regarded somewhat in the same light as needlework; or as an art which all women are competent to practise. Captain Brown, of the service of the Honourable Company, falls an early victim to the insalubrity of the Indian climate; and his widow thinks that a school would be of material assistance in providing for her own little ones. Or the Reverend Jonas Smith is removed from the weary labours of an ill-paid curacy; and his death leaves a delicately nurtured lady to struggle alone with the hard and bitter world. Or the Misses Thompson themselves, after years of patient drudgery as hired teachers, think to end their days in comfort by hiring others. So, through the fine Indian connection, or through the sympathising parishioners, or through the grateful efforts of former pupils, the lease and goodwill of Prospect Villa are obtained, the last proprietress retires to spend the evening of her life in peace, and the new school is commenced, with all usual assistance from skilful resident and visiting teachers. Let us hope that it will be crowned with success. Who does not honour the brave women who enter upon its duties? Who does not know the ever-widening circle of charity and kindness that will result from their prosperity; the relatives that they will support; the feebler friends that they will assist with timely hand; the good deeds that they will do in secret, hereafter to be proclaimed and rewarded in the sight of men and angels. Let us not say one word to diminish their hard-earned gains, or to curtail their noble usefulness; but we would advise them, then, to seek, and we would advise their clients strictly to require from them, some knowledge of the laws which govern the well-being of the human body, and the operations of the human mind. Physiology and psychology, in spite of their hard-sounding names, have long ceased to be abstruse mysteries; and may be understood, sufficiently for the management of a school on enlightened principles, by a course of accessible and not lengthy reading. They would teach how to strengthen those weak points of character, which are, in some degree, inevitable as results of the female constitution; but which are often morbidly and unnaturally defenceless. We complain with reason that the teachers of girls' schools are seldom guided by any definite principles in educating the feelings and the intellect of their pupils; but expect what is good and right to come of itself as a result of teaching: much as if a watch could be set in accurate movement by labour spent upon the polishing and decoration of its dial plate. The power of self control is seldom diligently exercised; the power of reflection, of looking inwards, of gaining self-knowledge in its true sense, is left to be the growth of chance: and the purely intellectual faculty, the power of comprehension, instead of being constantly employed upon objects within its grasp, is neglected, in order to overload the memory. Often joined to all this is a forcing system which encourages over-exertion of the growing brain, with all its concomitant and attendant evils; and which, among the elder girls, or among pupil teachers, who are excited by emulation or necessity to neglect the friendly warnings of fatigue, is often a source of lamentable bodily and mental failure. The young lady who springs upon the nearest chair at the sight of a mouse or a spider, is perhaps a greater curiosity now

than formerly; although, even now, not seldom met with. She is more common who expresses any slight mental agitation by energetic bodily movement, by scream, start, and gesture; and the greater frequency of such actions among girls than among boys does not need to be described. It is well known to arise from one of the characteristics of the female organism; and this, when unduly developed, amounts to the excitability which renders girls liable to hysteric fits from fright or other emotions; and prepares them for mesmeric and such like influences. The way to combat it, and to keep it within proper and healthful bounds, is by means of exercise: exercise of a kind which strengthens the habitual authority of the will over the limbs, which employs body and mind together and in unison, and cannot be performed without their co-operation. Such is afforded by all active games of skill. Boys have fencing, cricket, and a score of other pursuits, with this tendency. School-girls commonly do nothing but walk languidly in a row, along the same familiar and tiresome road; often reading or learning tasks by the way, as if to shut out the possibility of any observation of nature. Sometimes they practise dreary exercises, a caricature of drilling, invented by a famous school-mistress, who, upon the decline of an aristocratic connection, secured an evangelical one; and became suddenly convinced of the sinfulness of dancing, for which these exercises were her substitute. They involve only attitudinising and imitation; while girls want games in which their judgments shall teach them what they ought to do, and in which practice shall teach their hands to execute what their heads have planned. Battledore and shuttlecock, jeu de grâce, and archery, would fulfil these requirements; and are in all respects well adapted for girls. But then, Prospect Villa must have a suitable playground, and the mistress must understand its uses, and the way in which it will conduce to the proper training of her pupils.

Turning, now, to mental education, is there here no room for improvement? We well remember an evening visit to a schoolmistress, during which a gentle tap at the door was answered by "come in;" and a child with a book made her appearance. She was hastily retreating at sight of a stranger; but was ordered to remain, and was asked, with terrible emphasis upon the adverb, whether she now knew her lesson? Timidly replying in the affirmative, she handed a thickish octavo volume to the mistress, who apologised for the interruption, and then gave her attention to the task. The pupil was a pretty little girl of ten years old; with bright, intelligent, loving, black eyes, and great black curls bobbing upon her neck. The book seemed to be a chaotic assemblage of questions about nothing particular; and two of these, upon subjects diverse as the poles, the child answered correctly. Then came a momentous inquiry: "In what county of England are cranberries most abundant?" A puzzled and anxious look crept over the little face, the wistful eyes turned up to those of the teacher, but found no clue in their calm repose; and, after a pause, "Africa," was the reply. In another instant the door closed upon the retreating damsel, once more dismissed in disgrace; and our hostess, with a jest at the poor child's stupidity, returned to the subject which her entrance had broken off. We could not help thinking of the way in which the geographical mistress at that school must have discharged her duties; and of the total non-apprehension of all her teaching displayed in that one answer. The mistress who heard the lesson was not aware, we are sure, that there are two kinds of knowledge of a thing that is taught, the sensation, as distinguished from the meaning, the sound, as distinguished from the idea. She did not know that, in the case of many children, lessons only produce the first; unless explained diligently, carefully, unceasingly, until the crust of mere sense perceptions is broken through, the almost dormant intellect awakened, and mind brought into communion with mind. Without such a process (which some children receive at home from earliest infancy), tasks may be perfectly learned and repeated as sounds alone. The Muchir Achmet Menickley Pasha, commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army, was once, in presence of the writer, wickedly entrapped into a talk upon European politics. By-and-by, Italy was mentioned; and the Pasha, after assenting to much that was said about it, took advantage of a pause to inquire: "What is Italy?" Not where is it; but what? Is it a person or thing, animal or vegetable, fish or fowl? Many young ladies at school, who could repeat, with perfect glibness, a list of the kingdoms of Europe, are not, we suspect, very much wiser than the Egyptian general; and have learned little more than a certain order and succession of sounds, which might as well be in Sanscrit. If dodged or perplexed, they are as likely as not to remember the wrong one; and to say Africa in place of ——shire (the blank modestly expressing our own ignorance of the berry-bearing district). An admirable illustration of this sort of learning is furnished by the Rev. W. H. Brookfield, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, in his last published report to the Committee of Council on Education. He copies verbatim the following answers in the Church Catechism, from the slates of two children of eleven years old, and of fair intelligence, who had received instruction at school for five years.

The first answer is:

My duty toads God is to bleed in him to fering and to loaf withold your arts withold my mine withold my sold and with my sernth to whirchp and to give thinks to put my old trast in him to call upon him to

onner his old name and his world and to save him truly all the days of my lifes end.

The second answer is:

My dooty tords my nabers to love him as thyself and to do to all men as I wed thou shalt do and to me to love onner and suke my farther and mother to onner and to hay the queen and all that are pet in a forty under her to smit myself to all my gooness, teaches sportial pastures and marsters to oughten mysilf lordly and every to all my betters to hut nobody by would nor deed to be trew in jest in all my deelins to beer no malis nor ated in your arts to kep my ands from pecken and steal my turn from evil speak and lawing and slanders not to civet nor desar othermans goods but to lern laber trewly to git my own leaving and to do my dooty in that state if life and to each it his please God to call men.

We cite these answers, because they exhibit a kind of instruction not infrequent in schools for all classes of society; and depending partly upon the natural tendency of the teacher to routine, but much more upon ignorance of the manner in which the faculties of the mind can be got at and called into play, and of the necessity that exists for special training in the case of some individuals. We do not believe in great stupidity as a common natural gift. Doubtless, it sometimes is so; but, as seen among grown-up people, it is often artificial. The bad teacher complains of the pupil. There is a well-known instance of a girl who, at fifteen, was thought so stupid, that her father despairingly abandoned the attempt to educate her. This girl was Elizabeth Carter, who lived to be, perhaps, the most learned woman that England has ever produced. In boys' schools it is usual to urge that a system must be framed for the majority, and that study of individual character is impossible; but girls' schools are commonly smaller, and the pupils are far more easily subjected to direct personal influences. Their minds might be separately studied by their teacher with very little difficulty; if she only knew the importance of the work, and how to set about it; if she could withdraw her mind from teaching, and could try to realise what is meant by education.

The training of the feelings is a most important point in the management of girls, especially when much exposed, as they often are, to the subtle emotional influence of music. But most teachers are content to repress by discipline the external signs of temper and other passions, and then think that they have done enough. Human feelings, however, are highly elastic, and will be sure to re-assert their power when such pressure is removed, and when the events of life call them into activity. This is seldom the case during the first few years after leaving school, often the sunniest period of a girl's existence. But, when this period is past, how many homes are embittered by fretfulness or jealousy—how many illnesses aggravated by peevishness or discontent, for want of knowing how to commence the difficult task of self-control. As this is assuredly one of the first duties of life, so its inculcation should be made the first duty of the schoolmistress; not by wordy lessons, but by gentle precepts—by apt and timely illustration, and by constant example. To supply these, some knowledge of the mind's mechanism is required; but, where knowledge is wanting, its place can only be supplied by the delicate tact of the maternal instinct.

And if Miss Thompson inquires, as she possibly may do, what all this has to do with health, we shall be prepared to answer her. There is nothing so conducive to health as equanimity; and, in a life chequered by the ordinary amount of cares and trials, equanimity can be secured only by habitual control (not suppression) of the feelings, and by habitual and intelligent application of the mind to worthy and dignified pursuits. To procure such habits should be the aim and end of education; any desired kind of learning will be sure to follow in their train; and the power to execute correctly Listz's wildest sonata, or to repeat backwards all the questions and answers in Miss Mangnall's book, is not to be put in comparison with them.

We have confined our observations to schools for girls; not because we think those for boys are perfect, but because girls suffer most from injurious influences such as we have endeavoured to describe.

SALOME AND I.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE burthened years rolled slowly on, bringing change to all. My grandmother died when I was fourteen years old, just when my time as a scholar in Chalmy's Hospital was over.

Firmly clutched in her grasp, after death, I found a small key, attached to a black ribbon round her neck. Gently, but firmly, I possessed myself of it. I knew, without being told, that it was the key of the small oak-box, which had stood concealed under the bed ever since I was a child, but whose contents I had never been permitted to examine. I felt that there, if anywhere, lay concealed the dark secret of my early life, the solution of that dread mystery whose baleful shadow had darkened our household ever since I could remember at all. I opened it with a trembling hand. It contained nothing but a bundle of yellow, mouldy letters, and two or three old newspapers. It was growing dark, so I lighted a candle, and sat down by the side of the corpse to read the letters. They were the records of a love that had burnt its little hour, and died long ago. My mother's heart lay revealed before me in all its womanly purity and boundless wealth of affection.

The letters were divided into two series, those before marriage, and those after mar-

riage. The latter interested me most. They were addresses to my father, then a commercial traveller, during his journies in the country, and abounded with such pleasant glimpses of the home that ought to have been mine, and breathed such a spirit of tenderness towards him to whom they were addressed, that tears of yearning for my lost mother stood in my eyes as I read; and the vision of my cheerless life rose before me, and struck chill to my heart. Gradually, as I read, the interest deepened; and the last two or three letters were filled with the apprehension of some impending misfortune, but which was alluded to in terms too vague for me to divine what it really was. The letters concluded suddenly without giving me the wished-for information. I turned to the newspapers, though with little hope of enlightenment from them.

A paragraph in the first that I opened, struck my attention at once. It was headed, Trial and Conviction of William Wrangford for Forgery. I read it through three times with an unshaken quietude that surprised me when I afterwards came to reflect on it; and then, after replacing the newspaper and letters, I took up my hat and went out—I, the felon's son. By what paths I went, or how I came there, I know not, but just as the day was breaking I found myself on the brink of Langley Farm. I stood there quietly contemplating it for a long time, till the morning-star had vanished, and the east was all a-flame. A heavenly quiet seemed to brood over those solemn depths. Why not end there the pain and the shame that must otherwise be my lot through life? A brief struggle and all would be over. There seemed no impiety in the thought. My soul was weak, and fainted for the Comforter; and would not He, who poured that beautiful morning over the earth, comfort me, and restore me to the arms of my long-lost mother?

Suddenly, from the distant farmstead, sounded the loud, steady lowing of kine, and then, after a short time, I heard the pure, quivering voice of some rustic maiden singing, as she milked, some old-world ballad, whose words I could not catch, but whose melody comforted my heart, and filled my eyes with happy tears. And so, after a time, I arose and wandered slowly back to the home that was to be mine no longer.

Mrs. Grayson's death, which took place the following year, severed the last frail link that bound me to Salome. For while the old lady lived I heard frequently from London, and sometimes there was even a message for me; and once a lock of raven hair, which I cherished as my dearest treasure. But after Mrs. Grayson's death, Salome seemed lost to me for ever. As time lapsed on, and my mind ripened, I grew to regard her as a sweet abstraction rather than as the living reality I had known her to be. That brief epoch, during which our shadows had mingled, appeared in the mellow distance of years, as no more than a lovely dream of childhood; in fine, I came unconsciously to regard her more as a creation of my own fancy, than as anything else, and as such she mingled in all my day-dreams, flickering before me in the firelight of winter evenings, and mingling with my musings as I lay on the summer-grass.

I know not what would have become of me after my grandmother's death, had not Mr. Carnforth offered to retain me in the school as an assistant. No offer could have been more to my taste; so I was quickly installed in my new situation. I went to live with the master, and had a little attic for my bed-room, lighted from the roof. In this room I hung up my portrait of Salome, and constructed a rude book-case to hold my few treasured volumes.

This quiet and serene mode of life lasted for several years without interruption. I pursued my philological studies with ardour, and became, in the course of time, somewhat of an antiquarian also. On Saturday afternoons, I took long excursions into the country, visiting old churches, deciphering hoary tombstones, and ancient brasses; or hunting up the legendary history of some old ruin. Like a tempered autumn day my life glided gently on; fleckered, indeed, by light or shadow, as the recollection of Salome, or my father, arose in my heart; but unacquainted with any great tempest of passion, and never overcast by sombre clouds of grief.

My attainments in the way of languages began to be noticed and commented on by gentlemen visiting the school. I had several old manuscripts to translate for them at different times; and the way in which they were done seemed to gratify my patrons.

I was nineteen years old. It was one chill evening in September, too dark to read, and too early to light the lamp, as I sat musing by the fire, with my chin on my hand, and my elbow on my knee, that I heard the rustle of a silk dress behind me, as some one gently opened the door. I turned instinctively, but without curiosity. At last she was come back to see me. There was no need for more light to see who it was. I knew her in an instant. There was the old smile, so faithfully preserved in my portrait of her; there was the old turn of the head that I remembered so well; there was the old voice, made fuller and mellower by years, but still the same.

"Salome!"

"Ralph!"

Our hands were together in an instant. She sat down in the chair I had vacated, and I placed myself on some ancient tomes at her feet, and pressing her fingers to my lips.

"And what have you been doing all these long years?" she asked.

"Expecting you," I replied.

"You have not forgotten me, then?"

"Never, Salome!"

"That is well," she answered. A rich colour struggled into her cheeks, and her eyes were moist. "In that fortnight among the Cumberland hills," she went on, after a pause, "lie embalmed the happiest days of my childhood. But give me some fuller particulars of your life since I saw you last, and tell me all the news about my old friends."

It did not take long to relate all I had to tell. "Were I a man," she said with a smile as I concluded, "I know no kind of life, speaking unambitiously, that would suit me better than yours. Duties to perform, onerous indeed, but not without profit to yourself and others, with a broad margin of leisure to indulge your literary tastes, and cultivate any course of study you may choose.

"There is a great want of stability in my mode of life," she continued. "My aunt is continually travelling from place to place in search of health or pleasure. No time to form friendships or likings of any kind. More than all, I feel the loss of that sweet round of domestic duties and pleasures which those alone who have no home know the want of.

"How strange it is," she resumed after a time, as she looked slowly round the library, in which the large tomes loomed heavily through the gathering darkness, "to find myself once more in this room, where we played together in childhood. There is a great longing in my heart to visit all the places consecrated to me by those sunny recollections. But it may not be."

"Is your stay here so short?"

"We proceed on our journey to-morrow," she replied. "When I say we," she went on, as if with some reluctance, "I mean my aunt, my cousin, Mr. Edward Chinfeather, and myself. We are going to Scotland for two months, after which we shall return to London for the winter."

Her face seemed to darken and change as she said these words, and the soft light to fade from her eyes, in the old way that I remembered so well when she was a child.

"To-night we go to the circus," she said, "for such is the supreme will and pleasure of my cousin. But let us talk of something else—of yourself and your prospects; for, believe me, I have your interests at heart, and look forward to your advancement in life with as much pleasure as though it were that of my brother."

She stayed about half an hour longer, talking with me of many things. We said farewell with affectionate earnestness, hoping shortly to see each other again.

No sooner was I alone than I set resolutely to work to analyse the flood of new thoughts that rushed through my brain. So many new hopes and fears too; for I now felt, for the first time, that I loved; and the rapture of that feeling subdued all others. The old child-fancy seemed suddenly swept back into some far anterior period of my life; and though the same face was still there, it was that of a child no longer. Only two hours before, I had been wondering in my dreamy mood whether I should ever meet any one whom I could love as I felt I were capable of loving, but having no regard for Salome in that light—holding her merely as a sweet recollection of my youth, as little more than a beautiful myth. And lo! there was now a more glorious reality than all my dreams had ever shadowed forth; and I felt that to love any other woman had now become for ever impossible.

But would she love me in return? Was I worthy of her? Would she not scorn me? And then that cousin of whom she had spoken? And a sharp pang of jealousy shot through me at the thought. But, through all my musings, the rapture of feeling that I loved shone like summer sunshine into the darkest corners of my heart. Suddenly I remembered that she had said, "We go to the circus to-night." Unknown to her, could I not gaze on her there? Stupid, not to have thought of it before, for the performance had probably already begun, and every moment was precious. Quickened by the thought, I was not long in setting off, partially disguised in a large old-fashioned cloak that belonged to the master, and an old broad-brimmed felt hat that I generally wore when gardening. I soon arrived at the large canvas booth erected by one of those nomadic companies of horse-riders who generally honoured Howthwaite with their presence for a few evenings every summer. I paid my money, and entered the promenade, which I judged to be the best place for my purpose. I had not been in a circus for many years, and for a few moments after my entrance, what with the music, the plaudits of the crowd, the glare of the gas, and the vision of a pink-legged young lady riding at a break-neck pace round the ring, I felt quite bewildered. As soon as mademoiselle had finished her daring act, there was a movement among the spectators, and I gradually edged my way to a place from whence I could take in the whole of the box tier at a glance. I soon singled out Salome from the rest. She was seated between Mrs. Chinfeather and a young gentleman, whom I took to be the cousin she had mentioned to me. He was quite handsome enough to be jealous of, that cousin of hers. He took no apparent interest in the performance, but dawdled with his watch-guard, and seemed to be trying, in a languid unconscious way, to count the number of burners in the large hoop pendant from the canvas roof, which filled the office of chandelier. Mrs. Chinfeather was the same as of yore; unchanged, save that there was, perhaps, a deeper touch of rouge than formerly on her cheeks; but on this point I am far from positive, as it might be the warmth of the place, or twenty other things, that gave such a heightened flush to her complexion. She was so bountiful with her applause, and dispensed it with such a gracious

and affable air, as though she were enriching every one near her, that each of the performers made her an especial bow, and seemed to be rendered intensely happy by her notice.

But Salome? She sat there, but with a mask on,—the same mask that had veiled her features, and stolen the light and happiness from her eyes when she mentioned her cousin's name to me. She looked so cold, stern, and unimpressionable, that I could hardly have believed it to be the same countenance that had bent so kindly over me as I sat at her feet but two short hours before, had I not seen the same change, though in a lesser degree, when she was with me. This change did not trouble me so much then as afterwards, when I had leisure to muse over the slightest circumstance; but let me muse as I might, I could never understand it. For the present, it was happiness enough to gaze on her, and to feel that she was near.

When the performance was over, I struggled into an obscure corner near the door, by which I knew they would have to come. They came at last.

"How ungallant you are to-night, Edward!" said Mrs. Chinfeather, as they passed me. "You might almost as well have no arms for any use that you make of them."

"Je suis ennuyé," he replied, with a slight yawn, but offering, as he spoke, one arm to his mother, and the other to his cousin. Mrs. Chinfeather accepted the proffered aid; but Salome merely made a slight movement with her head; and, drawing her shawl closer around her, passed on without a word. A coach from the hotel was in waiting for them. They entered it, and were driven away.

About two months after Salome's visit, Mr. Carnforth suddenly died. I was elected master in his place, though not without strong opposition on the part of one member of the committee, a grocer of the name of Basinglee. He wanted the situation for a nephew whom he was desirous of setting up in the world. My friends, however, carried the day; and, from that time, I became a mark for Mr. Basinglee's bitter hostility.

Mr. Carnforth generously left me the whole of his books, his household furniture, and fifty pounds in money. The rest of his property was divided among several poor relations. His was a noble heart; and in him I lost my best friend.

Through all the long years that had passed since my grandmother's death, I had never once forgotten that I was a felon's son. The blasting consciousness was ever with me: burnt—branded indelibly into my heart; and now that I had reached a position which satisfied, for a time at least, my humble ambition, I could forget it less than ever.

I had carefully read the evidence given on the trial, as reported in the newspapers; and I felt a secret consciousness that my father was guilty of the crime with which he was charged, and that it was hopeless ever to expect his return. Still I never for a single day forgot him. Dreary pictures presented themselves unbidden before me, and would not be put on one side. I seemed ever to see a wasted figure, one of a chained gang, working on a blinding highway, beneath the fierce noonday sun: or the same figure tending sheep in the lonely wilderness with never a soul to comfort him. Judging from my mother's letters, he must have been a loveable man; and, taking them as my foundation, I gradually came to persuade myself that there must be that in his disposition which I could both love and honour. I longed for his presence with that deep longing which they who have never known a parent's love alone can feel.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

The days and weeks passed slowly on, and I awaited in quiet impatience the return of my darling. I went mechanically through my daily labours, longing for the evening to come, when I should have nothing to do but muse and brood over my love, and dwell in anticipation on the delight of seeing her again. But weeks merged slowly into months, and still she came not; till gradually the conviction dawned on my mind that I should not see her again. I wrestled with it for a long time, and nourished hope in despair of itself; but when Christmas came and went, and brought her not, nor any sign or token of her remembrance of me, then indeed, I felt that all my golden visions were baseless as a dream. All through that winter the struggle lasted; but spring brought peace with healing on its wings. I loved her so fondly that it seemed very hard at first to have to give her up for ever; but slowly the troubled clouds parted, and the star of duty, serene and beautiful, shone once more into my heart; and I knew that though the happiness I had fondly dreamt of could never be mine, yet that my life need be none the less useful on that account. There were a thousand things to do; duties to perform; labours to achieve; let me, then, go on with a manful heart, knowing that all things would be made straight at last. I have mentioned before that I was fond of antiquarian studies. How or when the idea first possessed me I know not, that it would be no unwise thing to write a history of the antiquities of Howthwaite and its neighbourhood. The project slowly took form and consistency, till at length it became the fixed thought of my mind.

The country for miles round our little town was particularly rich in antiquarian objects. Nowhere were the foot-prints of the ancient masters of the soil more abundant and interesting. My mode of life for years back fitted me peculiarly for the task I proposed to myself. I had abundant materials to begin with ready to my hand: and as

many more as I might require, for the seeking. In the pleasant month of May I began my work, and through that summer I laboured hard at it, taking pedestrian excursions to lone villages among the hills; or to some old-world church or mansion, whenever I found it necessary. Working at it thus day by day, gradually the chaotic mass of materials that I possessed, took shape and order; and the end I had in view grew clearer before me. I had begun my work as a relief to my mind, weighed down by the loss of her I loved; but before I got halfway through it I loved it for itself. Only in it could I find relief from the gnawing sorrow at my heart. When I sat down to write, even the recollection of Salome faded into the background for a time; and I felt only that deep quiet pleasure which they alone know who see their actual intellectual work approaching nearer and nearer to the ideal standard premeditated in the mind. Neither was I without that happiness which the encouragement of others, capable of a just appreciation of my labours, could confer. Several of the most eminent gentlemen of the neighbourhood showed much interest in the progress of my work; and indeed, had it not been for their kind assistance, it would probably never have seen the light at all, but have remained in the limbo of things unborn. By the following spring it was finished and ready for the press. All difficulties in the way of publishing had been smoothed over by my friends; and with a beating heart I despatched my manuscript to London.

It came out; and was as successful as such a work, possessing a local rather than any general interest, well could be.

But now that my task was completed, my thoughts flowed back into their old channel, and I again felt that dreary void at my heart which I had but charmed away for a time. If I could but see Salome once again! was the continual burden of my thoughts. I was vain enough to think that she might now perhaps look with more loving eyes upon me, and even—wild thoughts—condescend to become my wife. I loved her so well that I felt as if my passion must perforce subdue her to the same mood. In all my previous dreams, if the thought of her as my wife ever crossed my mind, it was driven back by the terrible recollection which hung ever like a leaden weight round my aspirations, that I was a felon's son. I had, in some measure, worked out what I fancifully thought was my redemption from any tinge of shame that might attach to my name; and, knowing the goodness of Salome's heart, I sometimes thought that I might succeed in winning her for my own. But where find her?

I had long felt a desire to visit London; and, during the midsummer vacation of this year, I determined to gratify my wish. The first visit to London forms a sort of epoch in the life of every thinking man: more especially if he have lived from an early age in a small country town.

One day, as I was taking a solitary ramble through the streets, gazing curiously around me, I perceived two ladies come out of a draper's shop in the Strand. It was impossible to be mistaken in the identity of either of them. They were Mrs. Chinfeather and Salome. My heart beat for a moment or two as though it would burst; and I seemed to have been suddenly transported into dreamland, so unreal had that vast world around me in an instant become. I had eyes for them alone; but the fear of losing them amid the hurrying crowd soon brought me back to reality. Suiting my pace to their slow walk, I followed them at a distance; far enough behind not to be distinguished should they suddenly turn round, and yet near enough to keep them constantly in view. I followed them thus for more than an hour, till I saw them safely housed in number twenty-four of a quiet and genteel street; where, as I afterwards learned, Mrs. Chinfeather rented the first-floor front. After making a memorandum of the house and street, and casting many a lingering look behind, I departed. I hailed a cab, and returned to my lodgings. As soon as I was alone in my little room, I sat quietly down to debate the question with myself, whether it would be better to see Salome, or merely to write to her. Evidently the present opportunity was one that must not be lost. One way or other, my fate must now be decided. My meeting with her was so strange and unexpected, that, with a superstition common to lovers, I drew from it an augury favourable to my hopes. Day deepened into dusk, and dusk into night, and the great bell of St. Paul's had tolled twelve ere I had decided what to do. At length I determined to write in preference to seeking a personal interview. I was influenced in this by various prudential reasons, although my heart beat strongly with the desire to see her. I might call a dozen times and not find her at home; or if she were at home, Mrs. Chinfeather would probably be with her, and I shrank from the idea of asking for a private interview with the certainty of arousing that shrewd lady's suspicions. It was therefore best to write; and the point once decided on, I was not long in putting it into practice. A quarter of an hour sufficed to see my letter written and sealed, ready for the post. I did not venture to read it over, for I knew that I should be dissatisfied with it were I to do so: and I deemed it best to trust to what was written on the impulse of the moment, rather than to any studied effort. All the following day and night I felt restless and uneasy, and unable to remain quietly in any place for long. I wandered aimlessly through the streets, without thought or purpose, my mind continually filled with

one all-pervading idea, which left no room for thought or any other subject.

Late in the afternoon of the second day, on returning to my inn, I found a note addressed to me on the chimney-piece of the coffee-room. I hastened up-stairs, and locking myself in my bedroom, tore open the envelope with a beating heart. It ran as follows:—

"Miss Graham presents her compliments to Mr. Wrangford, and, while thanking him for the honour he has done her, must beg unreservedly to decline any further correspondence on the subject about which he wrote. Miss Graham is at a loss to understand what reason can have induced Mr. Wrangford to make such a proposition, and is sorry to find that her manner toward him (resulting from compassion and friendly feeling alone) has been construed in a manner so repugnant to her feelings. In conclusion, Miss G. feels that she has only to point out to Mr. Wrangford's good sense the absurdity of his present proceeding, for him to perceive at once the futility of his desires, and to inform him (however much she may regret the necessity that compels her) that the slight link which has hitherto existed between them must now be broken for ever; and that, should they ever meet in future, they must meet as entire strangers to each other."

I asked for my bill, and paid it; and, having directed my carpet-bag to be sent down to Cumberland by rail, I left the inn, and wandered through the streets till I found myself on the great North road, and had left the noise and bustle of London behind me. My intention was to walk back to Howthwaite. I knew that intense bodily fatigue would be the best corrective of the mental anguish to which I was now a prey; so I walked on and on, till even the populous suburbs were left behind, and far and wide the fields stretched round me, with here and there a solitary farmhouse to break the loneliness of the road. By this time it was night, and the wind was beginning to rise. Fuller and louder it rose and swelled, triumphant through the darkness; myriads of stars were shining brightly overhead, obscured at times by a few swift-scudding clouds, but never hidden for long. The great trees swayed and groaned, and flung their arms to and fro as they struggled with their invisible foe: and, in the lulls of the blast, weird noises and strange sounds came, borne through the darkness, such as daylight never breeds. Such a night suited well the mood in which I then was. Nature was disconsolate, and all things were gone wrong. It was fit that they should be so—and, if they never came straight again, what matter?

Thoroughly wearied out, I turned, at daybreak, into a barn, and slept for about three hours; after which I tramped on again, till overcome by fatigue. How many days I journeyed thus I know not, for I took no heed of time—striving to drive away reflection with hard walking: till, one evening at sunset, the well-known forms of the hills round Howthwaite loomed darkly before me, and I knew that I was near home. I lingered till the last streak of daylight had faded from the summit of Scawfell, and the lights from cottage windows shone like fireflies on the hill sides. Then, footsore and weary at heart, I paced unseen the familiar streets, and entered my home unannounced.

THE SHINGLE MOVEMENT.

Few common things are more interesting, or have done more mischief than the wandering beach-stones upon the shores of Kent. From the remotest historic periods the shifting of the shingle has been a source of surprise and annoyance to the inhabitants of the south-eastern coast. Travelling beach-stones, as they are called, have blocked up estuaries and havens, choked up the mouths of rivers, and ruined every Cinque-port in succession. Romney, Rye, Hythe, and Sandwich, have all died a Cinque-port's death—perished for want of water. Dover, the last of the Cinque-ports, would have shared the same fate ages ago, had not its mouth been kept open by constant sluicing.

It is amusing to observe the choice of difficulties offered to our notice, if we attempt to investigate the movements of these erratic pebbles. Old fishermen say, that "the beach or shingle, comes and goes with the wind," and, of course, with them, that settles the matter. Indeed, we also believe, that it is the wind-wave that sends the beach-stones upon their travels from west to east. But there are other opinions upon this subtle point which we will look into.

"The shingle," says one scientific observer, "is moved by the surf, which in the heavy south-west winds, breaks in a direction somewhat inclined to the line of the coast, and sends it on its travels to the eastward."

"Admitted," says another, "but this motive power is liable to be over-rated, because the ridges of the breaking waves shape themselves to the form of the coast. Thus, in a deep horse-shoe bay, for instance, the wind-wave would, of course, infringe upon the shore of the bay at different angles, and move the beach in contrary directions."

Another theory is, "That the shingle is moved in part by the tidal current taking advantage of the disturbance caused by the surf, and so giving the beach-stones a westerly motion." But that is irreconcileable with the fact, that the shingles always travel towards the east. Here, however, the tidal theorist steps in, and says, "That the tidal current is the only motion which can affect the shingle in deep, or moderately deep water, because the motion of the wind-wave is insensible a few feet deep." The wind-wave theorists meet this statement by the fact, that inasmuch as the tidal currents operate equally in opposite directions, so the shingle, if moved by this power, would merely flow up and down a certain space, and not exhibit

a steady progress, as it does, from west to east.

In the midst of these doubts and contradictions, it is positively asserted by others, that the shingles do not travel below one fathom under low-water mark. For instance, few travelling beach-stones ever manage to creep round a groyne — or projection, run out into the sea—the outer end of which is maintained in six feet depth of water, at all times of the tide. Now and then, indeed, a few straggling stones may be found to have passed such a point, but, for the mass, their roaming propensities are checked by this simple contrivance. Neither do beach-stones travel along in deep water, under the face of a vertical cliff; and, at fifty yards only from the steep beach off the pitch of Dungeness, the head-quarters of travelled beach-stones, an anchor armed with a scoop brings up nothing but mud.

Not wishing to complicate matters, we at once admit these to be facts, and that they would seem to prove that shingle objects to travel in deep water, and that its course can be arrested whenever we please. But we had better proceed cautiously, for no conjuror is up to more artful tricks, than your travelled beach-stone. He is most expert at playing at hide and seek. Even Colonel Pasley, while operating upon the hull of the Royal George, at Spithead, did not come to any positive opinion upon the matter. He found, indeed, that the tide acted as powerfully at the bottom as at the top; and, moreover, that it usually turned a little earlier below, than it did above (a fact, we believe, not known before), but that he thought it was incapable of moving the shingle, or any rounded object at the bottom of Spithead. "There may be," he continued, "narrow straits and passages where the scouring of the tide might remove shingle and other rounded objects, but no such cases have as yet been proved."

Now, if the tide has no influence upon the shingle, and if it does not travel below one fathom under low-water mark, what becomes of the millions of tons of pebbles, which, after forming a moveable covering for scores of miles upon our southern beaches, mysteriously dwindle away at various places, leaving the shore covered with sand? So abrupt is the disappearance of beach-stones, that the place of their exit is almost universally called "Sand-down," or "Shingle-end;" for, where the shingle ends, the sand begins. If it does not withdraw itself into deep water, and reappear again on some other shore, what becomes of it? It is difficult to suppose that its travels end at these places. Although there is an onward flow of myriads of tons, yet the shingles never appear to advance beyond these well-known limits.

The shingle movement is more lively on some shores than on others. It is very brisk in the neighbourhood of Dungeness; where a mighty mass of live beach is marching triumphantly into the sea. The rate at which the shingle grows seaward here, can be calculated with tolerable accuracy by means of the lighthouse. The earliest known building upon this spot was raised in sixteen hundred and three, at one hundred yards from the end of the Ness. In seventeen hundred and ninety-three it was seven hundred yards inland—if we may so call this mass of pebbles. Of course the lighthouse had become worse than useless, for it acted as a decoy, and was the cause of many wrecks. It was pulled down in seventeen hundred and ninety-three, and again built within a hundred yards of the then extremity of the growing mass. Thus, in one hundred and ninety years, the Ness had advanced six hundred yards into deep water at a rate of seven foot ten inches per annum. From actual survey made by Her Majesty's ship Blazer, in eighteen hundred and forty-four, this new lighthouse was two hundred and twenty-one yards from low-water mark; consequently the Ness had again advanced up to that period one hundred and twenty-one yards, or at the rate of about seven feet four inches per annum. Now the distance from the lighthouse to the sea, is becoming so great, that the necessity of shifting it again is quite evident, as ships running up channel are liable to be misled by it, for, of course, a lighthouse should be placed where the danger begins.

Another important accumulation of beach-stones is at Portland, where the shingle movement is very curious. This place is very frequently visited as a natural wonder, and, perhaps it is the most singular collection of beach-stones on our shores. Let us suppose a mass of rounded pebbles, composed of jasper, chert, limestone, and other substances partaking of the character of the rocks and cliffs of part of Devon and Cornwall. We will not stop to inquire by what means these stones travelled scores of miles along these shores, and ultimately rolled themselves up into a thin strip about seventeen miles long, a quarter of a mile broad, and about six feet deep, and so loose that a horse's leg sinks to the knee at every step. This arrangement is curious enough, but by some process the stones are made to diminish in dimensions from west to east, as though nature had sorted them into parcels according to their size. At Portland, for instance, they are of the size of swans' eggs, further on they diminish to hens' eggs; then to pigeons' eggs, then to the size of horse-beans; then they dwindle down to peas, and, ultimately, they pass through all the gradations of small shot, and finally vanish into mere dusty specks of blown sand.

An attempt has been made to explain how this diminishing process is brought about. It seems that the largest pebbles are always found to leeward, and this is accounted for by their being more easily moved by seas

than those of small dimensions, and being usually found upon the surface, they offer nearly the whole of their bulk to the action of the waves, Whereas the latter being more uniform in size, and closer packed together, expose little more than their upper surfaces. over which the waves have a tendency to travel, rather than to lift them from their bed. Thus the larger pebbles are rolled about by every wave, whilst the smaller pebbles are only moved in a mass. This seems to account for the position of the largest shingles being always to leeward, and to a certain extent explains the diminishing process observable in this bar; but we confess it does not clear up the mystery altogether: for why is not this singular arrangement found upon other beaches? For here it is so clearly marked, that a Portland fisherman is said to be able to distinguish, in the darkest night, any precise spot on the beach by the size of the pebbles.

It has been further noticed, that the action of the north-west wind clears away the pebbles in parts of this bar, and that the south-west wind restores them again. But how is it that the same sized stones are returned to their proper places, so as not to interfere in a perceptible degree with the diminishing process the shingles here are subject to? Nature never seems to make a blunder in returning the stolen shingle. She never mixes her swans' eggs with her pigeons' eggs or with blown sand. And it must be borne in mind, that these incessant changes and adjusting of particles is carried on during a zig-zag movement of the whole mass, without sensibly interfering with the proportions of an immense thin strip of shingles seventeen miles long, which still retains, in defiance of these operations, a gradation in the size of its pebbles from one end to the other.

If this singular bar is cut in a transverse direction in any part of its length, one general slope exists. Thus, from the summit down to a depth of from three and a-half to four and a-half fathoms below low water, the rate of inclination varies from one in five and a-half to one in seven. In the next depth of two fathoms, the slope is one in eight to one in eleven. Outside this the slope is one in thirty, varying from six to eight fathoms; at which depth below low-water mark the shingle ceases entirely, and is succeeded by fine sand. These angles of inclination are very instructive to engineers, in the formation of long-slope breakwaters such as Cherbourg, Plymouth, Ardglass, Donaghadee, &c.; and as the long slope system was not fully carried out at any of these works, their history is a history of disasters. We read of hundreds of thousands of tons of huge blocks of stone being carried away by a single gale at Plymouth and Cherbourg during their construction, and even now a large staff of engineers and workmen are constantly employed in repairs; but indeed, it seems that it belongs exclusively to the variable and capricious effects of the sea, when allowed to spend itself upon a long slope, to fix not only the angle of repose, but the very shape of the slope.

An attentive examination of the accumulative and destructive action of the waves upon shingle beaches has produced a rule, so far as one can be formed upon this subject. It has been observed that when seven, or any less number of waves fall upon the shore per minute, that then a destructive action is going on—or, in other words, that the shingle is disappearing. But that when nine or any greater number of waves beat upon the shore in the same time, then an accumulative action is going on—or the beach is increasing. This rule, however, must be received with caution, for it has been remarked that shingle generally accumulates with off-shore winds, and is scoured off during on-shore winds, and we believe that, however acute and scientific observations may be conducted upon the action of the sea at particular localities, that it would not be prudent to receive such conclusions as applicable to beaches in general. There was an instance of this last winter, when a heavy ground-swell, brought on by a gale of five hours' duration, scoured away, in fourteen hours, three million nine hundred thousand tons of pebbles from the coast near Dover. But in three days, without any shift of wind, upwards of three million tons were thrown back again. It should be mentioned that these figures are, to a certain extent, conjectural, but they approximate to the truth; the quantities having been derived from careful measurement of the profile of the beach.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

I LAND AT CRONSTADT.

We had no sooner cast anchor in the harbour of Cronstadt (it needed something to divert my attention, for I had been staring at the forts and their embrasures, especially at one circular one shelving from the top, like a Stilton cheese in tolerably advanced cut, till the whole sky swarmed before me, a vast plain of black dots), than we were invaded by the Russians. If the naval forces of his imperial majesty Alexander the Second display half as much alacrity in boarding the enemies' ships in the next naval engagement as did this agile boarding-party of policemen and custom-house officers, no British captain need trouble himself to nail his colours to the mast. The best thing he can do is to strike them at once, or put them in his pocket, and so save time and bloodshed. On they came like cats, a most piratical-looking crew to be sure. There were big men with red moustaches, yellow moustaches, drab moustaches, grey moustaches, fawn-coloured moustaches, and white moustaches. Some

had thrown themselves into whiskers with all the energy of their nature, and had produced some startling effects in that line. A pair of a light buff colour, poudré with coal-dust (he had probably just concluded an official visit to some neighbouring engine-room) were much admired. There were men with faces so sun-baked, that their eyes looked considerably lighter than their faces; there were others with visages so white and pasty that their little, black, Chinese eyes looked like currants in a suet-dumpling. And it was now, for the first time, that, with great interest and curiosity, I saw the famous Russian military great-coat—that hideous capote of some coarse frieze of a convict-colour, half-grey, half-drab (the colour of inferior oatmeal, to be particular) which is destined, I suppose, to occupy as large a place in history as the redingote guise of the first Napoleon. These great-coats—buttoned straight down from the throat to the waist and from thence falling down to the heels in uncouth folds and gathered in behind with a buckle and strap of the same cloth—had red collars and cuffs, the former marked with letters in a fantastic alphabet, that looked as a Greek Lexicon might look after a supper of raw pork chops. The letters were not Greek, not Arabic, not Roman, and yet they had some of the characteristics of each abecedaire. These gentry were police officers; most of them wore a round flat cap with a red band; and if you desire further details, go to the next toyshop and purchase a Noah's ark, and among the male members (say Shem: Ham is too bright-looking) you will find the very counterpart of these Russian polizeis. One little creature, apparently about sixty years of age, almost a dwarf, almost hump-backed, and with a face so perforated with pockmarks that, had you permission to empty his skull of its contents, you might have used him for a cullender and strained maccaroni through him—but with a very big sword and a fierce pair of moustaches; this small Muscovite I named Japhet on the spot. He walked and fell (over my portmanteau, I am sorry to say) all in one piece; and, when he saluted his officer (which every one of the privates seemed to do twice in every three minutes), and which salute consists in a doffing of the cap and a very low bow, he seemed to have a hinge in his spine, but nowhere else. There were men in authority amongst these policemen, mostly athletic, big-whiskered fellows, who looked as if they did the knocking-down part of the police business (shall I ever know better what these large-whiskered men do, I wonder?) These wore helmets with spikes on the top and the Double Eagle, in the brightest tin, in front. They must have been mighty warriors too, some of them; for many were decorated with medals and crosses, not, of any very expensive materials, and suspended to ribbons of equivocal hue, owing to the dirt. On the broad breast of one brave I counted nine medals and crosses (I counted them twice, carefully, to be quite certain) strung all of a row on a straight piece of wire; and, with their tawdry scraps of ribbons, looking exceedingly like the parti-coloured rags you see on a dyer's pole. Some had great stripes or galons of copper-looking lace on their sleeves; and there was one officer who not only wore a helmet, but a green surtout laced with silver, the ornaments of which were inlaid with black dirt and grease in a novel and tasteful manner. The custom-house officers wore unpretending uniforms of shabby green, and copper buttons: and the majority of the subordinates, both polizeis and douaniers, had foul Belcher handkerchiefs twisted round their necks. There were two other trifling circumstances peculiar to these braves, which, in my quality of an observer, I may be allowed to mention. Number one is, that nearly all these men had no lobes to their ears.* Number two is, that from careful and minute peeping up their sleeves and down their collars, I am in a position to declare my belief that there was not one single shirt among the whole company. About the officer I cannot be so certain. I did not venture to approach near enough to him; but I had four hours' opportunity to examine the privates (as you will shortly hear), and what I have stated is the fact. A Hottentot private gentleman is not ordinarily considered to be a model of cleanliness. It is difficult in England to find dirtier subjects for inspection than the tramps in a low lodging-house; but for dirt surpassing ten thousand times anything I have ever yet seen, commend me to our boarding-party. They were, assuredly, the filthiest set of ragamuffins that ever kept step since Lieutenant-Colonel Falstaff's regiment was disbanded.

I am thus particular on a not very inviting subject, because the remarkable contrast between the hideous dirt of the soldiery on ordinary, and their scrupulous cleanliness on extraordinary occasions, is one of the things that must strike the attention (and at least two of the senses) of every traveller in Russia. On parade, at a review, whenever he is to be inspected, a Russian soldier (and under that generic name I may fairly include policemen and douaniers in a country where even the postmen are military) is literally—outwardly at least—as clean as a new pin. But it would seem that it is only under the eye of his emperor or his general that the Muscovite warrior is expected to be clean; for, on every occasion but those I have named, he is the dirtiest, worst-smelling mortal to be found anywhere between Beechy Head and the Bay of Fundy. I am fearful, too, lest I should be thought exaggerating on the topic of shirts; but it is a fact that the Russians,

* This is a physical peculiarity I have observed in scores of Russians—some of them in the highest classes of society.

as a people, do not yet understand the proper use of a linen or cotton under-garment. The moujiks, who wear shirts, are apparently in the same state of doubt as to how to wear them, as the Scottish highlanders were on the subject of pantaloons after the sumptuary laws of seventeen hundred and forty-six. Poor Alister Macalister carried the breeches which the ruthless Sassenach government had forced on him, on the top of his walking-pole. Ivan Ivanovitch wears his shirt, when he is lucky enough to possess one, outside his trousers, after the manner of a surplice. The soldier thinks that the uniform great-coat covers a multitude of sins, and wears no shirt at all. According to the accurate Baron de Haxthausen, the kit of every Russian soldier ought to contain three shirts; but theory is one thing, and practice another; and I can state, of my own personal experience, that I have played many games at billiards with Russian officers even (you can't well avoid seeing up to your opponent's elbow at some stages of the game), and that if they possessed shirts, they either kept them laid up in lavender at home, or wore them without sleeves.

The unsavoury boarders who had thus made the Preussischer Adler their prize, very speedily let us know that we were in a country where a man may not, by any means, do what he likes with his own. They guarded the gangway, they pervaded the wheel, and not only spoke to the man thereat, but rendered his further presence there quite unnecessary. They placed the funnel under strict surveillance, and they took possession of the whole of the baggage at one fell swoop, attaching to each package curious little leaden seals stuck on bits of string, and inscribed with mysterious hieroglyphs strongly resembling the Rabbinical cachets which the Hebrew butchers in Whitechapel Market append to their joints of meat. Then a tall douanier began wandering among the maze of chests, portmanteaus, and carpet-bags; marking here and there a package in abstruse and abstracted manner with a piece of chalk, as though he were working out mathematical problems. We were not allowed to carry the smallest modicum of luggage on our persons; and—as I had been incautious enough, just before our arrival in harbour, to detach my unlucky courier's bag from my side, and to hold it in my hand—I was soon unpleasantly reminded of the stringency of the customs regulations of the port of Cronstadt. The tall douanier pounced upon the harmless leathern pouch quite gleefully, and, instantaneously declaring (in chalk) on the virgin leather that the angle A. G. was equal to the angle G. B., added it to the heap of luggage which then encumbered the deck. There it lay, with the little French actress's swan-down boa, and I am happy to state, my old enemy —Miss Wapps's perforated air-cushion. But Miss Wapps made the steward the wretchedest man in Russia for about five minutes; so fiercely did she rate him on the sequestration of that chattel of hers.

There was a dead pause, a rather uncomfortable status quo about this time, everybody seemed to be waiting for the performances to begin, and the boarding-party looked, in their stiff, awkward immobility, like a band of "supers" waiting the arrival of the tyrant. Only the little creature who was nearly a hunchback was active; for the mathematical genius had gone to sleep, or was pretending to sleep on a sea-chest, with his head resting in his chalky hands. It seemed to be the province of this diminutive but lynx-eyed functionary to guard against the possibility of any contraband merchandise oozing out of the baggage after it had been sealed; and he went peering, and poking, and turning up bags and boxes with his grimy paws, sniffing sagaciously meanwhile, as if he could discover prohibited books and forged banknotes by scent. Captain Steffens had mysteriously disappeared; and the official with the silver-lace, inlaid with dirt, was nowhere to be found. About this time, also, it occurred to the crew—taking advantage of this forty bars rest—to send a deputation aft, consisting of a hairy mariner in a fur-cap, earrings, a piebald cowskin waistcoat, a green shirt, worsted net tights and hessians, to solicit trinkgeld, or drink-money. On the deputation ushering itself into my presence, with the view above-stated, I informed it politely and in the best German I could muster, that I had already paid an extravagant price for my passage, and that I would see the deputation fried before I gave it a groschen; and, soon after this, the stewards, probably infected by some epidemic of extortion hovering in the atmosphere of Russia, began to make out fabulous bills against the passengers for bottles of champagne they had never dreamt of, and cups of coffee they had never consumed. And, as none of us had any Russian money, and every one was anxious to get rid of his Prussian thalers and silbergroschen, the deck was soon converted into an animated money-market, in which some of us lost our temper, and all of us about twenty per cent. on the money we changed.

There was a gentleman on board of the Hebrew persuasion—a very different gentleman, however, from my genial friend from Posen, or from the merchant in the cat-skins at Stettin—who had brought with him—of all merchandise in the world!—a consignment of three hundred canary birds. These little songsters had been built up into quite a castle of cages, open at all four sides; the hatches of the hold had been left open during the voyage; and it was very pretty and pastoral to hear them executing their silvery roulades in the beautiful May evening, and to see the Hebrew gentleman (he wore a white hat, a yellow waistcoat, a drab coat, light grey trousers and buff slippers, and, with

his somewhat jaundiced complexion, looked not unlike a canary bird himself), go down the ladder into the hold, to feed his choristers and converse with them in a cheerful and friendly manner. But he was in a pitiable state of tribulation; firstly, because he had learnt that the customs duties on singing birds in Russia were enormous; and, secondly, because he had been told that Jews were not suffered to enter St. Petersburgh.* He turned his coat-collar up, and, pulled his hat over his eyes with a desperate effort to make himself look like a Christian; but he only succeeded in travestying, not in disguising, himself; for, whereas, he had looked a Frank, open Jew, say, like Judas Maccabæus; he, now, with his cowering and furtive mien, looked unspeakably like Judas Iscariot. He was sorely annoyed, too, at the proceedings of one of the policemen, who, having probably never seen a canary bird before, and imagining it to be a species of wild beast of a diminutive size, was performing the feat of stirring up with a long pole, by means of a tobacco-pipe, poked between the wires of one of the cages, and was apparently much surprised that the little canary declined singing under that treatment. But, courage, my Hebrew friend! you have brought your birds to a fine market, even if you have to pay fifty per cent. ad valorem duty on them. For, be it known a canary sells for twenty-five silver roubles in Russia—for nearly four pounds! and, as for a parrot, I have heard of one, and two hundred roubles being given for one that could speak French.

The wag from the South of France had not been idle all this time. Who, but he counterfeited (while he was not looking) the usage and bearing of the little semi-humpbacked policeman, and threw us into convulsions of laughter? Who but he pretended to be dreadfully frightened at the officer in the dirt-inlaid lace, running away from him, after the manner of Mr. Flexmore the clown, when he is told that the policeman is coming! Who but he addressed the very tallest douanier in the exact voice, and with the exact gesture of the immortal Punch (at which we went into fits, of course, and even the adamantine Miss Wapps condescended to smile), pouring forth a flood of gibberish, which he declared to be Russian. The douanier looked very ferocious, and I thought the wag would have been knouted and sent to Siberia; but he got over it somehow, and gave the customs magnate a cigar, which that brave proceeded, with great gravity and deliberation to chew, and they were soon the best friends in the world.

I was getting very tired of assuring myself of the shirtlessness of the boarders, whom I had now been inspecting for nearly three quarters of an hour, when Captain Steffens reappeared, this time without the telescope, but with the thirty passports as usual fluttering in the breeze, and a pile of other papers besides. He had mounted his epaulettes again, had Captain Steffens, and a stiffer shirt-collar than ever; and on his breast nearest his heart there shone a gold enamelled cross and a parti-coloured riband, proclaiming to us awe-stricken passengers and to the world in general, that Captain Steffens was a knight of one of the thousand and one Russian orders. It might have been a Prussian order, you may urge. No, no; my eyes were too sharp for that. Young as I was to Russia, I could tell already a hawk from a handsaw, and the august split crow of the autocrat from the jay-like black eaglet of Prussia. I think Captain Steffens' decoration was the fifteenth class of St. Michael-the-Moujik. The chief mate was also in full fig; and, though he could boast no decoration, he had a tremendous pin in his shirt, with a crimson bulb a-top like a brandy ball. And Captain Steffens and his mate were both arrayed in this astounding costume evidently to do honour to and receive with respect two helmeted beings, highly laced, profusely decorated, and positively clean, who now boarded the steamer from a man-o'-war's gig alongside, and were with many bows ushered into the saloon.

Whether he had dropped cherublike from aloft, where he had been looking out for our lives, or risen like Venus from the salt sea spray, or come with the two helmets in the gig—though I could almost make affidavit that he was not in it when it rowed alongside,—or boarded the Prussian Eagle in his own private wherry, or risen from the hold where he had lain concealed during the voyage, or been then and there incarnated from the atmospheric atoms; whether he came as a spirit but so would not depart, I am utterly incapable of judging, but this is certain: that, at the cabin-door there suddenly appeared Mr. Edward Wright, comedian. I say Mr. Wright advisedly; because although the apparition turned out to be a Russian to the backbone, thigh bone, and hip bone, and though his name was very probably Somethingovitch or Off, he had Mr. Wright's voice, and Mr. Wright's face, together with the teeth, eyeglass, white ducks, and little patent tipped boots of that favourite actor. And he was not only Mr. Wright, but he was Mr. Wright in the character of Paul Pry—minus the costume certainly, but with the eye-glass and the umbrella to the life. I am not certain whether he wore a white hat, but I know that he carried a little locked portfolio under one arm, that his eyes without the slightest

* I am not aware of the existence of any Ukase positively forbidding Jews to settle at St. Petersburg: but it is certain that there are no Jews in the Russian capital. In other parts of the Empire a distinction is made between the Karaïm Jews, who abide by the law of the Old Testament, and the Rabbinical Jews, who hold by the Talmud. The former are tolerated and protected; but the latter are treated with great rigour, and are not permitted to settle in the towns.

suspicion of a squint were everywhere at once; that he grinned Mr. Wright as Paul Pry's grin incessantly; that he was always hoping he didn't intrude, and that he did intrude most confoundedly.

"Police?" I asked the Russian in a whisper.

My accomplished friend elevated and then depressed his eyebrows in token of acquiescence, and added "Orloff!"

"But Count Orloff is in Paris," I ventured to remark.

"I say Orloff when I speak of ces gens là," answered the Russian. "He is of the secret police—Section des Etrangers—counsellor of a college, if you know what that is? Gives capital dinners."

"Do you know him?"

"I know him!" repeated the Russian; and, for the first time during our acquaintance, I saw the expression of something like emotion in his face—and this expressed contemptuous indignation. "My dear sir, we do not know ces gens là, nous autres."

Mr. Wright was at home immediately. He shook hands with Captain Steffens as if he would have his hand off, clapped the first mate on the shoulder; who, for his part, I grieve to say, looked as if he would like to knock his head off; and addressed a few words in perfect English to the nearest passengers. Then he took the captain's arm quite amicably, and took the locked portfolio and the gleaming teeth (they were not Mr. Carker's teeth, but Mr. Wright's), and himself into the saloon. I was so fascinated at the sight of this smiling banshee that I should have followed him into the cabin; but the wary polizeis, who had already turned everybody out of the saloon in the most summary, and not the most courteous manner, now formed a cordon across the entrance, and left us outside the paradise of the Prussian Eagle, like peris rather than passengers.

Captain Steffens, Mr. Wright, the two superior helmets, the thirty passports and the additional documents—which I conjecture to have been our lives and adventures from the earliest period to the present time, compiled by the Russian consul at Stettin, and the secretary of legation at Berlin, with notes by Captain Steffens, and a glossary by Mr. Wright—were closeted in the saloon from a quarter to one to a quarter to four p.m., by which time (as the Preussischer Adler had fulfilled her contract in bringing us to Cronstadt, and would give us neither bite nor sup more), I was sick with hunger, and kinder streaked with rage. What they did in the saloon during this intolerable delay, whether they painted miniatures of us through some concealed spyhole, or played upon the piano, or witnessed a private performance of Bombastes Furioso by Mr. Wright, or went to sleep, no man could tell. The wag from the South of France, who, notwithstanding the rigid surveillance, had managed to creep round to the wheel, came back with a report that the conclave were drinking champagne, and smoking cigars. The story was not unlikely; but how was such an incorrigible joker to be believed? For three hours then, there was nothing to be done but to satisfy myself that the polizeis were really shirtless, and to struggle with an insane desire to fly upon my portmanteau and open it, precisely because it was sealed up. The other passengers were moody, and my Russian friend was not nearly so fond of me as he was at sea. For, you must understand, my passport was good to Cronstadt; but once arrived there, there was another process of whitewashing to be gone through; and, to be intimate with a man whose papers might not be in rule might compromise even nous autres.

The port of Cronstadt was very thronged and lively, and I feasted my eyes upon some huge English steamers from Hull and other northern English ports. It did me good to see the Union Jack; but where were the gunboats, Mr. Bull? Ah! where were the gunboats? Failing these, there were plenty of Russian gunboats—black, saucy, trim, diabolical, little crafts enough, which were steaming about as if in search of some stray infernal machine that might have been overlooked since the war time. Far away through the grove of masts, I could descry the monarchs of the forests, the huge, half-masted hulks of the Russian line-of-battle ships. The stars and stripes of the great American republic were very much to the fore this Tuesday morning; and, as I found afterwards, the American element was what Americans would term almighty strong in Russia. There was nothing to be seen of Cronstadt, the town, but the spires of some churches, some thundering barracks, the dome of the museum, and forts, forts, forts. But Cronstadt the port was very gay with dancing skiffs, and swift men-o'-war boats with their white-clad crews, and little coteries of coquettish yachts. The sky was so bright, the water so blue, the flags so varied, the yachts so rakish and snowy-sailed, that I could have fancied myself for a moment in Kingstown harbour, on my way to Dublin, instead of St. Petersburg but for the forts, forts, forts.

While I was viewing these things and cursing Mr. Wright (was it for this that he won our hearts at the Adelphi for so many years, inveigling us out of so many half-price shillings, and insidiously concealing the fact of his connection with Count Orloff—now Prince Dolgorouki's secret police?), while I was smoking very nearly the last cigar that I was to smoke in the open air so near St. Petersburg, there had glided alongside and nestled under the shadow of our big paddle-boxes a tiny war-steamer, or pyroscaphe, with a St. Andrew or blue X cross on a white flag at her stern, and another little flag at her fore, compounded of different crosses and colours, and looking curiously like a Union

Jack, though it wasn't one by any means. Nigra fuit sed formosa: jet black was her hull, but she was comely-beautiful, a long lithe lizard carved in ebony, with an ivory streak on her back (that was her deck), and gliding almost noiselessly over the water. She looked not so much like a steamer as like the toy model of one seen through a powerful opera-glass; and her wheel and compass, and spider-web rigging, and shining brass bolts, and beeswaxed blocks, would have looked far more in place in the toyman's window in Fleet Street, London, than in this grim Cronstadt. She had her little murder-popguns though—tapering little brass play-things, such as you may see by dozens in a basket, marked eightpence each, in the same toyshop window. This was a Russian-built boat, with Russian engines, engineers, and crew, and she seemed to say to me mockingly: "Ah! we have no war-steamers, haven't we? we are dependent upon England for our machinery, are we? Wait a bit!" She was, in truth, as crack a piece of naval goods as I—not being a judge—could wish to see. She had a full crew of fine hardy fellows, spotlessly clean, and attired from head to foot in white duck. They were strapping, tawny, moustachioed men; mostly, I was told, Fins. Your true Russian is no sailor; though you may teach him to row, reef, and steer, as you may teach him to dance on the tight-rope. On the paddle-bridge there was an arm-chair, covered with crimson velvet, and in it, with his feet on a footstool covered with the same material, sate the commander of the steamer. He was puffing a paper cigar; he was moustachioed and whiskered like a life-guardsman; he was epauletted and belaced; he was crossed and medalled for his services at the siege of Belleisle, doubtless; he had spotless white trousers tightly strapped over his patent-leather boots; but he had not a pair of spurs; though I looked for them attentively, and those who state that such ornaments exist on the heels of Russian naval officers are calumniators. Instead of a sword, he wore a dirk at his side, with a gold and ivory hilt, very tasteful and ship-shape; and, at the stern of the vessel there stood, motionless and rigid, a long man, with a drooping moustache like an artist's Sweetener, with a thoroughly Tartar face, and clad in the eternal coarse grey sack, who they said was a midshipman. He had a huge hour-glass before him, and two smaller quarter-hour-glasses, which he turned with grave composure when the sand had run out.

On the deck of an adjacent lighter I could see, for the first time, the genuine Russian national costume on a score of stalwart, bearded men, clad in an almost brimless felt hat (not unlike that patronised by the Connaught bogtrotters), a sheepskin coat, with the skinny side out and the woolly side in (Mr. Brian O'Lynn's favourite wear, and which he declared to be mighty convanient), baggy breeches, apparently of bed-ticking, and long, clumsy, thick-soled boots of leather innocent of blacking, and worn outside the trousers. These poor devils had been lading a Dutch galliot, and it being dinner-hour, I suppose, had knocked off work, and were lying dead asleep in all sorts of wonderful positions. Prone to the deck on the stomach, with the hands and legs stretched out like so many turtle, seemed to be the favourite posture for repose. But one gentleman, lying on his back, presented himself to my view in a most marvellous state of fore-shortening—leaving nothing visible to me but the soles of his boots, the convexity of his stomach and the tip of his nose. By and by their time for turning to again came; and, when I saw the mate or foreman—or whatever else he was—of the gang, step among them with a long twisted rattan, like that of the gaoler in the bridewell scene of the Harlot's Progress, and remind them that it was time to go to work by the gentle means of striking, kicking, and all but jumping on them, I received my first lesson, that I was in a country where flesh and blood are cheaper—much cheaper—than gentle Thomas Hood ever wotted of.

We had been in our floating prison with the chance of being drowned, three hours in addition to the seventy-three we had consumed in coming from Stettin, when the door of the saloon was flung wide open, and a polizei, seemingly seized with insanity, began frantically vociferating "Voyageur passport! Passport voyageur!" at the very top of his voice; which cries he continued without intermission till he either ran down, like a clock, or was threatened by a discreet and scandalised corporal with the disciplinary application of the stick if he did not desist. Poor fellow! this was, very likely, all the French he knew, and he was proud of it! Taking this as a gentle hint that we were to enter the saloon for passport purposes, we all poured into that apartment pêle-mêle like your honourable house to the bar of the Lords. And here we found several empty bottles and a strong smell of cigar smoke, which rather bore out the wag's story of the champagne and cigars; and, sitting at a table, Mr. Wright, more toothy than ever, the captain, the helmets, and somebody else we little expected to see.

There were only twenty-nine passengers standing round the table. Do you understand now? The thirtieth passenger was one of the lot—one of ces gens-là—one of Count Orloff's merry men. So, at least, I conjecture, for he was the somebody else at the table, and he asked me, with all the coolness in the world—when my turn came, and as if he had never seen me before in his life—what my object in coming to Russia might be? I told him that I voyaged pour mon plaisir, at which reply he seemed but moderately satisfied, and made a neat note of it on a sprawling sheet of paper. I had no-

ticed that he had been very taciturn, and, as I thought, deaf, during our passage—a white-faced hound!—but that he took to his victuals and drink very kindly; and this was his object for coming to Russia. Of course, a Russian government employé may travel for his pleasure, like other folks; especially on a probable salary of about forty pounds a-year; and this pale functionary may have been returning from the baths of Spa or Wildbad; but it was very suspicious. I wonder how much he paid for his passage!

We did not get our passports back yet—O no! but each traveller received a card on which was a big seal, in very coarse red wax, bearing the impress of the everlasting double eagle, and this was our passport from Cronstadt to Petersburg town. Very speedily and gladly we bade a long, long farewell to the Preussicher Adler and Captain Steffens; and, giving up our sealing-wax passports, stepped on board the pyroscaphe. She had her name in gilt capitals on her paddle-boxes; but I could not spell Russian then, and so remained ignorant on that subject. I ought not to omit stating that Mr. Wright—after telling us in a jaunty manner, that it was beautiful weather, beautiful weather, and that we had had a charming passage, charming passage—disappeared. He did not remain in the saloon, and he did not come with us. Perhaps he returned aloft to resume his cherub duties, or floated away, or melted away, or sank away. At all events, he went right away somewhere, and I saw him no more.

During the three hours the pyroscaphe had been lying alongside the Preussischer Adler, there had been a long plank, neatly carpeted, sloping from the gangway of one vessel to that of the other. The sight of this plank, all ready for walking upon, and yet tabooed to mortal footsteps, had tantalised and riled us not a little. On the bulwark of the Adler there had been laid, at right angles to it but also sloping downwards, a long, heaviesh beam of wood painted in alternate black and white streaks, which was to serve as a hand-rail for the ladies when they made the descensus Averni. The opposite extremity of this beam was held by a Russian man-o'war's man on the pyroscaphe's deck; a thick-set, moustachioed lout in white-duck cap, frock, and trowsers. He held the beam in one hand, and supported his elbow with the other; and there and thus I declare he held it during three mortal hours. It would have been about as easy for him to stand on one leg during that period. I lost sight of him occasionally, as I paced to and fro on the deck; but, when I returned, he was always in the same position—stiff, motionless, impassible, with the beam in his right hand and his elbow in his left. I do not know what amount of stic would have fallen to this poor fellow s share if he had flinched or stumbled; but, when I tried to picture to myself an English, a French, or an American sailor in a similar position, I could not help admitting that Russia is a country where discipline is understood, not only in theory, but in practice.

The interior of the pyroscaphe did not belie her exterior. She was appointed throughout like an English nobleman's yacht. There was a tiny saloon with rosewood fixings, distemper paintings in gilt frames, damask hangings, held up by ormolu Cupids, and mirrors galore for the fair ladies to admire themselves in. The little French actress immediately converted one of them into the prettiest picture-frame you would desire to see in or out of Russia; and, leaving Miss Wapps to inspect her blue-bronzed nose in another, I went on deck, where there were benches on bronzed legs and covered with crimson velvet, and camp-stools with seats worked in Berlin wool. I have been told that the officers of the Russian navy have a pretty talent in that genre of needlework. My Russian friend—who by this time had utterly forgotten (so it seemed) my existence—had found a friend of his in the person of the commander of the steamer, and the pair had retired to that officer's private cabin to drink champagne. Always champagne. I noticed that when they recognised each other at first, it was (oddly enough) in the French language that their salutations were interchanged.

We were yet in the Gulf of Finland, and the canal of the Neva was still far off, when Captain Smith—who, it will be remembered, had gone over to the enemy, or Wapps faction—came over to me with overtures of peace. He had somehow managed to save those boots of his out of the general confiscation wreck, and carried them now like buckets. He had his reasons for an armistice, the captain; for he remarked that we might be of great service to one another in the Custom House. "You help me, and I'll help you," said Captain Smith. This was all very fair and liberal, and on the live and let live principle, which I heartily admire; but, when the captain proffered a suggestion that I should help him by carrying the abhorred boots with the sheepskin linings, and proceeded to yoke me with them, milkman fashion, I resisted, and told him, like Gregory, that I'd not carry coals—nay, nor boots either. On this he went on another tack; and, conveying me to a secret place under the companion-ladder, earnestly entreated me to conceal, on his behalf, underneath my waistcoat, a roll of very sleezy sky-blue merino, which he assured me was for a dress for his little daughter Gretchen, and which he had hitherto concealed in the mysterious boots. I must say that the sky-blue merino did not look very valuable: I don't think, in fact, that it was worth much more than a "tam;" and I did not relish the idea of becoming an amateur smuggler on other merchants' account. But what was I to do? The captain was a bore, but the father had a claim to my services. It was pleasant,

besides, to think that the captain had a daughter at all—a bright-eyed little maid, with soft brown hair, perhaps; and I pictured her to myself in the sky-blue merino sitting on the captain's knee, while that giant mariner told her stories of his voyages on the salt seas, and forbore in love from saying anything about the perilous ice and the magnetic islands; nay, glossed over his shipwreck off the Isle of Weazel, and made out the supercargo to be an angel of light rather than a "tam tief." So I smuggled Captain Smith's sky-blue merino through the Custom House for him; and if I had no sorer sin than that on my conscience, I should go to bed with a light heart to-night.

In gratitude for this concession the captain proposed a drink, to which I nothing loth—for I was quite faint with the heat and delay—consented. The refreshment-room was a little mahogany box below, with a cut-glass chandelier hanging from the ceiling, about half-a-dozen sizes too large for the apartment. There was a bar covered with marble, and a grave waiter in black, with a white neckcloth and white gloves: a waiter who looked as if, for private or political reasons, he was content to hand round schnapps, but that he could be an ambassador if he chose. There was a barkeeper, whose stock of French was restricted to these three words, Eau-de-vie, Moossoo, and Rouble-argent. He made liberal use of these; and I remarked that, although it was such a handsome pyroscaphe with a chandelier and camp stools worked in Berlin wool, the bar-keeper took very good care to have the rouble-argent in his hand, before he delivered the Eau-de-vie to a Moossoo. Paying beforehand is the rule in Russia, and this is why the Russians are such bad paymasters. The little mahogany box is crammed with passengers, talking, laughing, and shaking hands with each other in pure good-nature, as men will do when they come to the end of a tedious journey. The wag from the south of France was in immense force, and incessantly ejaculated "Vodki! Vodki!" capering about with a glass of that liquor in his hand, and drinking and hobnobbing with everybody. I tried a glass of vodki,* and immediately understood what genuine blue ruin was. For this Vodki was bright blue, and it tasted—ugh! of what did it not taste? Bilge-water, vitriol, turpentine, copal-varnish, fire, and castor-oil! There was champagne, and there was Lafitte, too, to be had, Cognac, brantewein, schnapps, aniseed (of which the Russians are immoderately fond), and an infinity of butter-brods spread with caviare—no more, no more of that!—dried belouga, smoked salmon, cold veal, bacon, sardines, and tongue. I don't know the exact figures of the tariff of prices; but I know that there was never any change out of a silver rouble.

In this convivial little den, Captain Smith in his turn found a friend. This was no other than Petersen; and nothing would serve Captain Smith, but that I must be introduced to Petersen. "De agent vor de gompany that used do go do Helsingfors," he whispered. What company, and what the deuce had I to do with the gompany, or with Petersen? However, there was no help for it, and I was introduced. Petersen daguerreotyped, would have passed very well for the likeness of Mr. Nobody; for his large head was joined to his long legs, with no perceptible torso, and with only a very narrow interval or belt of red plush waistcoat between. He had the face of a fox who was determined to be clean shaved or to die; and, indeed, there was not a hair left on his face, but he had gashed himself terribly in the operation, and his copper skin was laced with his red oxide of lead blood. He had a hat so huge and so furry in nap, that he looked with it on like the Lord Mayor's sword-bearer, and he may, indeed, have been the mysterious Sword-bearer's young man, of whom we heard so much during the sittings of the City Corporation Commission. When I was introduced to him as "Mister aus England," (which was all Captain Smith knew of my name) he opened his wide mouth, and stared at me with his fishy spherical eyes with such intensity, that I fancied that the sockets were pop-guns, and that he meant to shoot the aqueous globes against me. The open mouth, I think, really meant something, signifying that Petersen was hungry, and desired meat; for the Captain immediately afterwards whispered to me that we had better offer Petersen a beefsteak. Why any beefsteak of mine should be offered to Petersen I know no more than why the celebrated Oozly bird should hide his head in the sand, and whistle through the nape of his neck; but I was stupefied, dazed with the vodki and the chandelier, the confusion of tongues, and Petersen's eyes and hat, and I nodded dully in consent. A beefsteak in Russia means meat and potatoes, and bread, cheese, a bottle of Moscow beer, and any pretty little tiny kickshaws in the way of pastry that may strike William Cook. Petersen, who had accepted the offer by lifting the swordbearer's hat, began snapping up the food like a kingfisher; and as regards the payment, the we (Captain Smith being busily engaged somewhere else with his boots) turned out to be me, and amounted to a silver rouble. Three and threepence for Petersen! He was to give me some valuable information about hotels, and so forth, Petersen; but his mouth was too full for him to speak. He changed some money for me, however, and gave me, for my remaining thalers, a greasy Russian rouble note, and some battered copecks. I am inclined to

* Or Vodka, both terminations seem to be used indifferently.

think that Petersen benefited by this transaction considerably.

All at once there was a cry from the passengers above, of "Isaacs! Isaacs!" and, leaving Petersen still wolfing my beefsteak, I hastened on deck. We had entered long since the canal of the broad, shallow, false, shining, silvery, Neva, in which the only navigable channel was marked out by flags. We had left on our right hand the palaces of Oranienbaum and Petergoff, and now we saw right ahead, flashing in the sun like the orb of a king, the burnished dome of the great cathedral of St. Izak. Then the vast workshops and ship-building yards of Mr. Baird; then immense tallow warehouses (looking like forts again), and then, starting up on every side, not by twos or threes, but by scores, and starting up, as if by magic, the golden spires and domes of Petersburg!

I say starting up: it is the only word. Some half-dozen years ago I was silly enough to go up in a balloon, which, bursting at the altitude of a mile, sent its passengers down again. We fell over Fulham; and I shall never forget the agonising distinctness with which houses, chimneys, churches seemed rushing up to us instead of we coming down to them. I specially remember Fulham church steeple, on which I expected every moment to be transfixed. Now, though the plane was horizontal, not vertical, the effect was exactly similar; and, as if from the bosom of the Neva, the churches and palaces started up.

We went, straight as an arrow from a Tartar's bow, into the very heart of the city. No suburbs, no streets gradually growing upon you, no buildings gradually increasing in density. We were there; alongside the English quay, in sight of the Custom-house and Exchange, within a stone's throw of the Winter Palace, hard by the colossal statue of Peter the Great, nearly opposite the senate and the Saint Synode, close to the ministry of war, within view of the Admiralty, and under the guns of the fortress, before you could say Jack Robinson.

The English quay? Could this be Russia? Palaces, villas, Corinthian columns, elegantly dressed ladies with parasols and lapdogs, and children gazing at us from the quay, handsome equipages, curvetting cavaliers, and the notes of a military band floating on the air. Yes: this was Russia; and England was fifteen hundred real, and fifteen thousand moral, miles off.

The handsome granite quays and elegantly dressed ladies were not for us to walk on or with just yet. A double line of police sentries extended from a little pavilion in which we landed to a low whitewashed archway on the other side of the quay, from which a flight of stone steps led apparently into a range of cellars. Walking, tired and dusty, through this lane of stern policemen (Liberty and the ladies peeping at us over the shoulders of the polizeis) I could not resist an odd feeling that I had come in the van from the house of detention at Cronstadt to the county gaol at Petersburg, and that I was down for three months, with hard labour; the last week solitary. Curiously enough, at balls, soirées, and suppers, at St. Petersburg, at Moscow, in town and country, I could never divest myself of that county-gaol feeling till I got my discharge at Cronstadt again, three months afterwards.

A DULL DAY ON EXMOOR.

Mr. Albert Smith, in the course of his entertainment at Egyptian Hall, is accustomed to preface that admirable monologue of the Engineer of the Austrian Lloyd's, with this remark, "He told me the stupidest story that I ever heard in all my life, and now, ladies and gentlemen, I am going to tell it to you." Thus I, having passed through and mercifully got out of Thursday, the twenty-eighth day of August—the dullest day by far in the white annals of my summer life—am about to communicate that experience.

The companions of my misfortune were two: Lieutenant Kidd Shinar, of Her Majesty's Foot, and Olive Thompson, Esquire, of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, and, by practice, an amateur painter of landscapes. The place where we three were then and are now residing is eminently congenial to all delineators of scenery. Upon the red rocks by the sea, on little islands in the wooded streams, and upon the sides of our purple hills, there are pitched countless tents, under the shelter of which the purveyors to the water-colour exhibitions are seen during this season at their pleasant toil. When they are not thus actively employed under canvas, they saunter loosely about the village in intellectual gin-punch-and-Shelley-looking groups, with short pipes, flannel shirts, sketch-book, and moustachios. Our young ladies peep from under their slouch hats as they go by, upon the deathless works of these distinguished youths with admiration, and "Oh! I should dearly love to be a painter's wife!" they confess at nightly toilettes to their bosom friends. The parents of these young people, however, entertain very different views upon this subject, and regard our artists, as a general rule, as a less respectable order of painters and glaziers.

Nothing but desperate ennui could have made brothers of Olive Thompson, Kidd Shinar, and me. We had each sat at our separate table in the Hotel Coffee Room for eleven days running—if I may apply that word to days that crawled—quite unconscious, as it seemed, of each other's existences. When the newspaper was laid down by Thompson, about four feet from where I was, I would ring the bell to inquire of the waiter whether anybody was using the Times. When I had done sending my fourth letter to people I did not care a

penny stamp about, Kidd Shinar would summon him in like manner, and tell him to fetch a lighted candle, as though there were nothing of the kind close by. And each having heard each other's dinner orders, we would make precisely the same gastronomic inquiries upon our own account, as though we had no data to go upon. We behaved, indeed, we flattered ourselves (and without the flattery it would be impossible to keep this sort of thing up), as only English gentlemen can behave, for eleven wet days long. On the twelfth day Kidd Shinar of her Majesty's Foot gave in, and commenced conversation. He made a remark which was brief, to the point, and not admissive of any obstructive argument:

"What is to be done, to-day?" we inquired simultaneously of the waiter, after breakfast.

"Well, gentlemen, I'm afraid it will be wet."

"Afraid! What do you mean by afraid?" said the Lieutenant; "you know it will be wet, you vagabond! Is there anything going on besides the rain?"

"To-day, sir—let me see, sir—the twenty-eighth? There are races at the forest to-day, sir."

"What forest?" I inquired.

"Exmoor, sir,—Exmoor Forest."

"But I thought Exmoor *was* a moor," I said,—"a place without a tree."

"So it is," said Thompson, "that's why they call it a forest.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, let's go," said I.

"Exmoor is very beautiful, only a little exposed in bad weather," doubted Thompson.

"Have you got a fly in?" asked the lieutenant.

"Not exactly a covered fly; no, sir; the covered flys are all out; we've a dog-cart, sir." He looked through the back window where the vehicle in question was standing in the yard under a shed. The rain was falling upon it slowly and steadily, just as it had done at its commencement, two hundred and sixty-four hours before.

"I don't see any signs of a break," said Shinar gloomily, "do you?"

"No; I only see a dog cart," replied Thompson, laughing. We all laughed, it was very excusable in people who had not smiled for a week.

"Let us go," I said once more, greatly refreshed.

"Let's!" echoed the other two. We got a bill of the entertainment, whose very simplicity (a farmer's plate, a pony race, and a donkey race) seemed to promise well; and Thompson, who knew the ten miles that lay between us and the festive scene, agreed to drive. I insisted upon sitting behind, because I am of a modest and retiring nature by birth, and because I saw that my two friends would thus intervene between the rain and me. Kidd Shinar had a bran new green silk umbrella of exquisite proportions but rather delicate make, and his get-up was effeminately gorgeous, such as encases youth upon the grassy slopes of Goodwood, or in the Stand on Ascot Heath. Olive Thompson was but little less resplendent as a member of the western circuit taking holiday; and as for myself, my clothes were from Bond Street, quite sufficiently unpaid for, and I also had a rather fashionable silk umbrella. We were certainly none of us equipped for that twenty-eighth day of August upon Exmoor. We had railway rugs and summer overcoats however; and lighting our cigars, we started hopefully. There were seven hills or so to be ascended before we could reach the moorland, and throughout the whole of that distance did Olive Thompson descant upon the sublimity of a scene that was entirely hidden in fog; it was like talking of some beloved relative to an unfortunate person who has never chanced to see that person.

"Here's where I took my sketch of the Thread Stream," said he, suddenly pulling up at a cataract; "you may remember the picture perhaps, Mr. Shinar, in the Exhibition of last year?"

"No, I didn't see it," said the Lieutenant sharply, for he was getting bored and damp.

"In water-colours I conclude," said I, smiling, so that he should not miss the joke.

"No, sir," said the artist gravely, "in oils; it was twenty-five feet from the door of the octagon room, and three inches from the floor; it was considered rather fine."

"Was it?" I said as drily.

There was then a silence for about a mile, except for the soft sough of the rain, and for the wind which caught us from time to time round the corners of the road, and threatened to overturn the whole concern into the ravine beneath.

"Look out for your umbrellas at the turn here," cried Thompson presently.

"I can't hear a word you say," roared Kidd.

"Look out for your——"

The reiterated warning was lost in a sudden gust; there was a sharp whirring noise, as if a pheasant had started up at the back of me; and, turning round, I perceived the lieutenant's umbrella, upside down and in ribbons looking like nothing so much as that parachute which came down upon Blackheath, so contrary to poor Mr. Cocker's calculations. Kidd Shinar presented a spectacle so utterly wretched, and appeared so despairingly unconscious of the rain, which was just beginning to spoil his beautifully brushed hat, that I could scarcely hold on for laughing. Thompson, who had had nothing but the drippings of this green umbrella by way of shelter (which had already turned his blue cravat yellow), was not displeased.

"I vote we go back," exclaimed Kidd Shinar.

"O, no," said the barrister (who had a

waterproof), "the weather is looking better, and it's almost as far back as forward." The lieutenant locked at his own exquisite boots inquiringly, and then began to whistle.

"That is Badgerley yonder, if you could see it," said Thompson, after a long pause; "have you ever heard of the Doones of Badgerley?"

I thought I was in for some anecdotes of the aristocracy; but I was dry, and tolerably good-humoured, and I returned for answer, that I had not, and that I felt much interest in the Doones of Badgerley.

"I can tell you all about the Doones of Yorkshire," said the lieutenant sulkily, "if that's anything to do with it. Doone was sheriff, and kept the hounds, and I've been at his place many times. He had a brother somewhere in the south."

"Ah, but he didn't commit murder and eat human flesh habitually, as these Doones of Badgerley did—did he?" urged Thompson.

"I dare say. They were a queer lot, I believe," said Shinar, grimly.

"Bless my soul!" cried I, "it's raining very hard; don't you think we had better go back?"

"Don't be afraid, my dear fellow," said Thompson, laughing; "poor Doone was hung in chains on yon hillock, just seventy years ago. He had made an excursion with some members of his family to a desolate farm near Barnstaple, when nobody was at that time at home but an infant and a maidservant in charge of it; the latter, seeing the Doones ride up, and being aware, although she did not know them, that she had nothing to offer people of their quality, left the child in the cradle, and got into the oven out of their way. The visitors then roamed over the establishment, selecting such things as they had occasion for, and afterwards sat down in the kitchen to the baby and onions. Mr. D., however, with a poetic spirit that did him honour at the moment, but which afterwards caused him to be hung in chains, chose to deliver himself of the following distich, which he addressed extemporaneously to the food in question;

'Child, if they asks thee who eat thee,
Say thou 'twas Doones of Badgerley.'

"The girl in the oven, who had a talent for remembering verses, bore these words carefully in her mind, and after the departure of the Doones to their private residence yonder, she gave such information to the local constabulary that the result was the violent extinction of the whole family, without even an appeal to the Sir George Grey of the period."

"How was it the girl was not done brown in the oven?" asked the lieutenant tenaciously.

"It was on a Sunday," answered Thompson, with calm triumph, "and the farmer was very properly accustomed to confine the household to cold meat upon that day."

We had now got upon the great waste of Exmoor, which is interspersed with dangerous peat bogs and morasses, and extends about ten miles every way, with scarcely a fence or a tree. The rain drove up between the low hills in dense masses, but descended less thickly upon the higher parts of the road, from which we could see a good way round. On our left lay the little sluggish stream, not a yard across, which from this desolate birthplace flows down, through a land of plenty, of park and meadow, of orchard and cornfield, by the old cathedral city to the southern shore. Our attention was drawn to it on a sudden by Kidd Shinar.

"My precious jingo!"—that was the lieutenant's expression—"if they ain't red deer!"

Red deer they were, bounding one after the other over the infant Exe without any effort, and then pacing grandly on into the mist: the highest antlered of them, the stag of stags, leading by a few paces the royal herd. These red deer of Exmoor are among the few still left in England except in parks. They are hunted by a peculiar breed of dogs, fuller of tone and deeper of tongue than common, and, as some of the north country sportsmen observe, by a peculiar breed of men. The truth is, several matters have to be observed in the pursuit of deer, which are unknown to men accustomed only to follow smaller game; and those who don't regard such particulars must expect to be stigmatised sometimes as a pack of foolish fox-hunters. The fox-hunters we know, in their own country, take it out, in their turn, upon the hare-hunters, who are sometimes addressed as thistle-whippers. This finding the deer for ourselves, or at least going to look for it after it has been marked down, seems a far nobler method than that of turning the astonished animal out of the back door of an omnibus; and the death he sometimes dies here, at bay in the dark Devon stream, or leaping in mad career down some red precipice sheer on to the sea-shore, seems fine and fitting. I happened to remark something like this to the lieutenant, whereupon he mounted his deer hobby, holding on principally by the antlers, upon the different stages and varieties of which he dilated, in the pouring rain, until I was almost ready to drop. As a botanist is the last person whom I would ask to sympathise with me upon the delights of floriculture, so I am well purposed never again to put a sportsman upon the scent of his favourite game.

We came continually upon great quantities of fine oxen looking quite oily in the rain, and among large droves of Exmoor ponies, beautiful-eyed and eloquent featured, but unkempt and shaggy enough, and seeming piteously thin by reason of their long coats having got wet through,

and clinging to their bodies; one particularly pretty fellow, standing under a little tower with no roof to it, built into such a wall as the Picts and Scots might have erected, looked out upon us with an Irish complacency, that made me laugh aloud. My companions, become by this time mere human sponges—Thompson's waterproof, by the bye, as wet on one side as the other, and looking like a great piece of blotting-paper—were quite incapable of seeing humour in anything; nor did they take any interest in the cost of these little nags, from five pounds up to the fancy price of fifteen, with which, as well as with much other useful information, I attempted to favour them.

Arriving at last at the village, where the people seemed to be going about much as usual, and the day not to be considered by any means a wet one, we asked a crowd of men who were standing about a cottage door, which was the way to the inn?

"This is the inn," said they, "and nothing but it."

It was a four-roomed dwelling, of which one apartment was a sleeping-room, and the other three were filled with sixty-eight copper-coloured natives from the neighbouring iron mines. Kidd Shinar, who had fed himself in the spirit for the last five miles upon imaginary beefsteaks and cutlets at the very least, with tarts and clotted cream to follow; who had been warming his hands and drying himself, in idea, by a blazing fire in a private room; who had almost gone to bed, I may say, by anticipation, in a magnificent chamber, attended by obsequious waiters with continuous brandy and water, hot—Kidd Shinar groaned.

Olive Thompson and I took him by the hands in pity, and led him in, and these rude men, touched by our inexpressibly pitiable condition, made room for us around the little fire. They themselves were wet, it is true, but it was their normal state to be so, for upon Exmoor it always rains. They crowded round Kidd Shinar's umbrella (that was) and around mine, which was entirely paralysed on one side, as though they were unaware of the original intention of umbrellas.

"Ask for a private room," said Shinar, dolefully.

"With turtle and devilled whitebait," added Thompson; "do!"

But, room was made for us at the table, presently, and we sat down to cold meat and capital beer. Wherever we sat, or moved, or hung our hats or coats, or stood still, there was a puddle. Whenever we shook our heads in the negative, a halo of rain-water was cast from them as from a housemaid's mop. Shinar's moustaches hung down perpendicularly from his lip like those of a Chinese mandarin. After these two men had dined, however, their sentiments and feelings were so greatly changed that they proceeded to contemplate walking a mile and a half up-hill to an open moor whereupon the race-course was, and thither at last they went. As, in the first place, I had not been so cast down by misfortune as they, so I was not now so unduly excited by cold meat and partial dryness as to venture out again unnecessarily, but remained in company with about half of our copper-coloured friends.

They were as fine and intelligent looking a set of men as I ever saw, and the one or two women among them, remarkably bright-eyed and cleanly. There was no drunkenness, to be called so, and very little quarrelling; but I was told that there were almost as many folks in that Exmoor beer-house every day as upon this particular occasion. The village Simonsbath, which will soon be a town, and probably one day a very large one, is at present in its infancy; but a handsome church is built there, and a parsonage—the clergyman not yet appointed; we will hope for mechanics' institute and lending library in due time. The mines in its neighbourhood have been taken on trial by three of the largest companies in England, and bid fair to make a populous haunt and busy mart of this barren and unproductive moor. I confess that I like the miner, and think him a very civil fellow at bottom. He won't be domineered over, and he won't stand soft soap (nor any other soap, to look at him); but when you have drunk out of his own quart pot, and taken a spark from his own short pipe, he is an honest, kind-hearted, sensible person, and has as large a stock of good feelings about him as of bad words. I, for my part, got on capitally with my neighbours on either side; and, if I did treat them to a glass or two, it was not until I had partaken of their own hospitality first. Their conversation ran, for the most part, upon the prospects of the pits: "if the lode goes wedge-like, with the smaller end down, why then it soon comes to an end; but, if the small end is uppermost, there's no knowing where it mayn't spread below," they said; and seemed to take an interest in the matter generally, apart from its relation to themselves. They did not complain much of anything, except of "Capel," who seemed to stand in the way of everybody dreadfully. He made their work harder; he lowered their wages; he doubled their toil-time; and he defrauded, at the same moment, the whole of the three companies. I took him to be some wicked overlooker, or unjust steward, for a long while, until I learned that Capel broke their pick-axes and shovels. When I asked who he really was, in order to expose such a ruffian in this journal, he turned out to be some unpleasant mineral substance, which the miners are constantly coming upon, hard as the iron they are in search of, but not nearly so valuable.

There was a deal of singing going on all this time, for the most part neither spirited,

humorous, nor decent; otherwise the hour passed pleasantly enough until my two companions returned, if indeed these miserables were they! If they went out sponges, what marine invective can express their appearance when they got back again? They were sodden and dripping wet as well; they were pulp in the third stage, and might have been made into a couple of sheets of foolscap by one process of a paper-machine. They had waded, it seemed, through a marsh and quagmire up to the festive scene, and, bivouacking under a grand stand of five planks which let in the rain, and where refreshments were selling solely in the shape of great sticks of peppermint, they had witnessed a crowd of ponies start out into the blinding mist, and not come back again. They had waited a reasonable time, allowing for the length of the course, and then returned, concluding that the whole of the competitors were lost. They said that it rained far worse than ever; that they thought they had caught their deaths of cold; and that they were both going to bed immediately. The landlord replied to this, that there was but one bed in the house, and that there was a sick person in it already (a sick person above all that harmony from forty voices!) but that he would lend them such clothes as he had, with pleasure. A little space was cleared in front of the fire, and then and there the man of the law and the man of the sword disrobed and rearranged themselves; never was metamorphosis more complete. I gave up from that moment every stitch of faith about "once a gentleman always a gentleman," and transformed it, at once, to clothes. I doubt whether even my own appearance—which is eminently aristocratic — could have survived the change.

I shook hands with the more friendly of my copper-coloured companions and mounted once more behind the dog-cart; the pair in front were as wet as ever in five minutes, and much more ridiculous. I, myself, was very little better off, for my poor paralysed umbrella got a stroke in its fifth rib, and Thompson drove too quickly to admit of my holding it up properly, and keeping myself on my perch at the same time; he was very savage, and so was the lieutenant. The rain and the wind increased as we topped the moor again, and the mare did not like to face them; an angry man makes but a bad driver; and as she swerved from side to side, then jibbed, then reared, I saw that matters were getting serious. As we were nearing a little bridge upon our way, with a steep bank and a brook upon the right, the creature became quite unmanageable; I jumped out to run to her head, but she was too quick for me; she gave one mad plunge to the left, and, at a sharp cut of the whip in punishment, ran the wheels back to the very parapet, stood straight up on her hind legs, and fell over—down the height, backward—dog-cart and all. I never expected to see either of my companions alive again, but they fell clear of the vehicle, one on each side of the ditch, and sprang to their feet at once.

"My precious jingo!" exclaimed the lieutenant, not without a touch of gratitude in his tone.

"It was my fault," said Thompson.

The mare was all this time committing the most determined suicide with her head under water in a narrow ditch; the shafts were broken, but she was sufficiently bound to the cart — poor thing — for it to prevent her rising. We cut her loose and got her up unhurt; that was the sole thing, except our personal safety, to congratulate ourselves upon. The rain was getting a trifle worse, the wind was certainly more violent, we were five miles distant from any house—save that of Mr. Doone's of Badgerley—upon Exmoor, and it was getting dark.

I have been present during the worst part, —the longest half, that is—of a meeting at Exeter Hall. I have heard five Protectionist speakers—one down and the other come on—at an agricultural banquet. I have listened to a Latin declamation at the University, from the lips of a public orator. I have heard the same story, for the fourth time, at mess. I was once at a convocation of the Clergy of ——, but no experience of dreariness and weariness that I can call to mind, endures comparison with our walk home from Exmoor. The mare fell lame, and kept limping and slipping behind us, exciting our wrath and wounding our sympathies at the same time. The men fell lame—Thompson and Shinar—the landlord's shoes being much too big for them and full of bumps, and presently Shinar lost one of his altogether. Our all having to poke about for that shoe in the wind and the rain, and the mud, and the half-darkness, was a wretched incident; and when he had found it, big as it was, he couldn't get it on again. None of us spoke, except once; then Thompson, who was much the biggest of the three, inquired, in an awful kind of murdering voice, which of us had first proposed going to these Exmoor Races? The ravine was on one side of me with a sheer precipice of fifty feet, and I hastened to lay it all upon the waiter.

"Then I'll kill that waiter," said Thompson, solemnly.

"And so will I," added Lieutenant Shinar.

But neither of them did it, and we wound up that dismal day with a jovial evening, throughout which the spared waiter waited wonderfully.

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"*Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

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TALK-STOPPERS.

We hear a great deal of lamentation now-a-days, proceeding mostly from elderly people, on the decline of the Art of Conversation among us. Old ladies and gentlemen with vivid recollections of the charms of society fifty years ago, are constantly asking each other why the great talkers of their youthful days have found no successors in this inferior present time. Where—they inquire mournfully—where are the illustrious men and women gifted with a capacity for perpetual outpouring from the tongue, who used to keep enraptured audiences deluged in a flow of eloquent monologue for hours together? Where are the solo talkers in this degenerate age of nothing but choral conversation? Embalmed in social tradition, or imperfectly preserved in books for the benefit of an ungrateful posterity, which reviles their surviving contemporaries, and would perhaps even have reviled them as Bores. What a change seems indeed to have passed over the face of society since the days of the great talkers! If they could rise from the dead, and wag their unresting tongues among us now, would they win their reputations anew, just as easily as ever? Would they even get listeners? Would they be actually allowed to talk? I should venture to say, decidedly not. They would surely be interrupted and contradicted; they would have their nearest neighbours at the dinner-table talking across them; they would find impatient people opposite, dropping things noisily, and ostentatiously picking them up; they would hear confidential whispering, and perpetual fidgeting in distant corners, before they had got through their first half-dozen of eloquent opening sentences. Nothing appears to me so wonderful as that none of these interruptions (if we are to believe report) should ever have occurred in the good old times of the great talkers. I read long biographies of that large class of illustrious individuals whose fame is confined to the select circle of their own acquaintance, and I find that they were to a man, whatever other differences may have existed between them, all delightful talkers. I am informed that they held forth entrancingly for hours together, at all times and seasons, and that I, the gentle, constant, and patient reader, am one of the most unfortunate and pitiable of human beings in never having enjoyed the luxury of hearing them: but, strangely enough, I am never told whether they were occasionally interrupted or not in the course of their outpourings. I am left to infer that their friends sat under them just as a congregation sits under a pulpit; and I ask myself amazedly (remembering what society is at the present day), whether human nature can have changed altogether since that time. Either the reports in the biographies are one-sided and imperfect, or the race of people whom I frequently meet with now, and whom I venture to call Talk-stoppers, because their business in life seems to be the obstructing, confusing, and interrupting of all conversation, must be the peculiar and portentous growth of our own degenerate era.

Perplexed by this dilemma, when I am reading in long biographies about great talkers, I do not find myself lamenting, like my seniors, that they have left no successors in our day, or doubting irreverently, like my juniors, whether the famous performers of conversational solos were really as well worth hearing as eulogistic report would fain have us believe. The one invariable question that I put to myself under these circumstances runs thus, Could the great talkers, if they had lived in my time, have talked at all? And the answer I receive is, In the vast majority of cases, certainly not.

Let me not offensively and unnecessarily mention names, but let me ask, for example, if some such famous talker as say—the Great Glib—could have discoursed uninterruptedly for five minutes together in the presence of my friend Colonel Hopkirk. The colonel goes a great deal into society; he is the kindest and gentlest of men; but he unconsciously stops, or confuses conversation everywhere, solely in consequence of his own sociable horror of ever differing in opinion with anybody. If A. should begin by declaring black to be black, Colonel Hopkirk would be sure to agree with him, before he had half done. If B. followed, and declared black to be white, the colonel would be on his side of the question, b fore he had argued it out; and, if C.

peaceably endeavoured to calm the dispute with a truism, and trusted that every one would at least admit that black and white in combination made grey, my ever-compliant friend would pat him on the shoulder approvingly, all the while he was talking, would declare that C.'s conclusion was, after all, the common sense of the question, and would set A. and B. furiously disputing which of them he agreed or disagreed with now, and whether on the great Black, White, and Grey question, Colonel Hopkirk could really be said to have any opinion at all.

How could the Great Glib hold forth in the company of such a man as this? Let us suppose that delightful talker, and a few of his admirers (including, of course, the writer of his biography), and Colonel Hopkirk to be all seated at the same table; and let us say that one of the admirers is anxious to get the mellifluous Glib to discourse on capital punishment, for the benefit of the company. The admirer begins, of course, on the approved method of stating the objections to capital punishment, and starts the subject in this manner.

"I was dining out, the other day, Mr. Glib, where capital punishment turned up as a topic of conversation——"

"Ah!" says Colonel Hopkirk, "a dreadful necessity—yes, yes, yes; I see—a dreadful necessity—Eh?"

"And the arguments for its abolition," continues the admirer, without noticing the interruption, "were really handled with great dexterity, by one of the gentlemen present, who started, of course, with the assertion that it is unlawful, under any circumstances, to take away life——"

"Ha! unlawful—just so," cries the colonel. "Very true. Yes, yes—unlawful—to be sure—so it is—unlawful, as you say."

"Unlawful, sir!" begins the Great Glib, severely. "Have I lived to this time of day, to hear that it is unlawful to protect the lives of the community, by the only certain means——"

"No, no—O dear me, no!" says the precipitately-compliant colonel, with the most unblushing readiness. "Protect their lives, of course—as you say, protect their lives by the only certain means—yes, yes, I quite agree with you."

"Allow me, colonel," says another admirer, anxious to assist in starting the great talker, "allow me to remind our friend, before he takes this question in hand, that it is an argument of the abolitionists that perpetual imprisonment would answer the purpose of protecting——"

The colonel is so delighted with this last argument that he bounds on his chair, and rubs his hands in triumph. "My dear sir!" he cries, before the last speaker can say another word, "you have hit it—you have indeed! Perpetual imprisonment—that's the thing—ah, yes, yes, yes, to be sure—perpetual imprisonment—the very thing, my dear sir—the very thing!"

"Excuse me," says a third admirer, "but I think Mr. Glib was about to speak. You were saying, sir——?"

"The whole question of capital punishment," begins the delightful talker, leaning back luxuriously in his chair, "lies in a nutshell." ("Very true," from the colonel.) "I murder one of you—say Hopkirk here." ("Ha! ha! ha!" loudly, from the colonel, who thinks himself bound to laugh at a joke when he is only wanted to listen to an illustration.) "I murder Hopkirk. What is the first object of all the rest of you, who represent the community at large?" ("To get you hanged," from the colonel. "Ah, yes, to be sure! to get you hanged. Quite right! quite right!") "Is it to make me a reformed character, to teach me a trade, to wash my blood-stains off me delicately, and set me up again in society, looking as clean as the best of you? No!" ("No!" from the compliant colonel.) "Your object is clearly to prevent me from murdering any more of you. And how are you to do that most completely and certainly? By perpetual imprisonment?" ("Ah! I thought we should all agree about it at last," cries the colonel, cheerfully. "Yes, yes—nothing else for it but perpetual imprisonment, as you say.") "By perpetual imprisonment? But men have broken out of prisons." ("So they have," from the colonel.) "Men have killed their gaolers; and there you have the commission of that very second murder that you wanted to prevent." ("Quite right," from the former quarter. "A second murder—dreadful! dreadful!") "Imprisonment is not your certain protective remedy, then, evidently. What is?"

"Hanging!" cries the colonel, with another bound in his chair, and a voice that can no longer be talked down. "Hanging, to be sure! I quite agree with you. Just what I said from the first. You have hit it, my dear sir. Hanging, as you say—hanging, by all manner of means!"

Has anybody ever met Colonel Hopkirk in society? And does anybody think that the Great Glib could possibly have held forth in the company of that persistently-compliant gentleman, as he is alleged, by his admiring biographer, to have held forth in the peculiar society of his own time? The thing is clearly impossible. Let us leave Glib, congratulating him on having died when the Hopkirks of these latter days were as yet hardly weaned; let us leave him, and ascertain how some other great talker might have got on in the society of some other modern obstructor of the flow of eloquent conversation.

I have just been reading the Life, Letters, Labours, Opinions, and Table-Talk of the matchless Mr. Oily; edited—as to the Life, by his mother-in-law; as to the Letters, by his grand-daughter's husband; and as to the

Labours, Opinions, and Table-Talk, by three of his intimate friends, who dined with him every other Sunday throughout the whole of his long and distinguished life. It is a very pretty book in a great many volumes, with pleasing anecdotes—not only of the eminent man himself, but of all his family connections as well. His shortest notes are preserved, and the shortest notes of others to him. "My dear Oily, how is your headache? Yours, Boily?" "My dear Boily, worse than ever. Yours, Oily?" And so on. His great sayings are also recorded for the first time with due regard to chronological exactness. We know that it was when he was actually living at Highgate, and not when he was only on the point of leaving Hampstead, that he made his famous speech to his wife's sister, who was standing at the bottom of his garden one day, looking at the view. "My love," he said, "always sit down to look at a view. The more completely you set the body at rest, the more widely you throw the mind open to the influences of Nature."

At the time the thoughtless lady laughed, and he remarked with his customary gentleness:

"You will not laugh always, Poppet. Let us go in to tea."

Years afterwards, when Oily was no more, that same wife's sister (the Poppet of early days) happened to be going out for a walk on the Heath with the venerable Boily, then peacefully approaching the end of his long and useful career.

"My dear sir," she playfully said to him, "do you mind exchanging your stick for a camp-stool? We are going to see a view, and I love to sit down when I look at a view."

The venerable Boily, who had been present when the remarkable words were spoken at the end of the garden, instantly recalled them, and, fixing his piercing eye on the speaker, said:

"Our poor Oily! You remember?"

She looked at him in eloquent silence. Who shall say what she remembered or what she did not in that venerable presence and at that affecting moment?

Anecdotes of this sort abound in the book, so do portraits of Oily at various periods of his existence,—so do fac-similes of his handwriting, showing the curious modifications which it underwent when he occasionally exchanged a quill for a steel-pen. But it will be more to my present purpose to announce for the benefit of unfortunate people who have not yet read the Memoirs, that Oily was, as a matter of course, a delightful and incessant talker. He poured out words, and his audience imbibed the same perpetually three times a week from tea-time to past midnight. Women especially revelled in his conversation. They hung, so to speak, palpitating on his lips. All this is told me in the Memoirs at great length, and in several places; but not a word occurs anywhere tending to show that Oily ever met with the slightest interruption on any one of the thousand occasions when he held forth. In relation to him, as in relation to the Great Glib, I seem bound to infer that he was never staggered by an unexpected question, never affronted by a black sheep among the flock, in the shape of an inattentive listener, never silenced by some careless man capable of unconsciously cutting him short and starting another topic before he had half done with his own particular subject. I am bound to believe all this—and yet, when I look about at society as it is constituted now, I could fill a room, at a day's notice, with people who would shut up the mouth of Oily before it had been open five minutes, quite as a matter of course, and without the remotest suspicion that they were misbehaving themselves in the slightest degree. What—I ask myself—to take only one example, and that from the fair sex—what would have become of Oily's delightful and incessant talk, if he had known my friend Mrs. Marblemug, and had taken her down to dinner in his enviable capacity of distinguished man?

Mrs. Marblemug has one subject of conversation—her own vices. On all other topics she is sarcastically indifferent and scornfully mute. General conversation she consequently never indulges in; but the person who sits next to her is sure to be interrupted as soon as he attracts her attention by talking to her, by receiving a confession of her vices—not made repentantly, or confusedly, or jocularly—but slowly declaimed with an ostentatious cynicism, with a hard eye, a hard voice, a hard—no, an adamantine—manner. In early youth, Mrs. Marblemug discovered that her business in life was to be eccentric and disagreeable, and she is one of the women of England who fulfils her mission.

I fancy I see the ever-flowing Oily sitting next to this lady at dinner, and innocently trying to make her hang on his lips like the rest of his tea-table harem. His conversation is reported by his affectionate biographers, as having been for the most part of the sweetly pastoral sort. I find that he drove that much-enduring subject, Nature, in his conversational car of triumph, longer and harder than most men. I see him, in my mind's eye, starting in his insinuating way from some parsley garnish round a dish of lobsters—confessing, in his rich, full, and yet low voice (vide Memoirs) that garnish delights him, because his favourite colour is green — and so getting easily on to the fields, the great subject from which he always got his largest conversational crop. I imagine his tongue to be, as it were, cutting its first preliminary capers on the grass for the benefit of Mrs. Marblemug; and I hear that calmly-brazen lady throw him flat on his back by the utterance of some such words as these:

"Mr. Oily, I ought to have told you, perhaps, that I hate the fields. I think Nature in general something eminently disagreeable—the country, in short, quite odious. If you ask me why, I can't tell you. I know I'm wrong; but hating Nature is one of my vices."

Mr. Oily eloquently remonstrates. Mrs. Marblemug only says, "Yes, very likely—but, you see, it's one of my vices." Mr. Oily tries a dexterous compliment. Mrs. Marblemug only answers, "Don't!—I see through that. It's wrong in me to see through compliments, being a woman, I know. But I can't help seeing through them, and saying, I do. That's another of my vices." Mr. Oily shifts the subject to Literature, and thence, gently but surely, to his own books—his second great topic after the fields. Mrs. Marblemug lets him go on, because she has something to finish on her plate—then lays down her knife and fork—looks at him with a kind of wondering indifference, and breaks into his next sentence thus:—

"I'm afraid I don't seem quite so much interested as I know I ought to be," she says; "but I should have told you, perhaps, when we first sat down, that I have given up reading."

"Given up reading!" exclaims Mr. Oily, thunderstruck by the monstrous confession. "You mean only the trash that has come into vogue lately; the morbid, unhealthy——"

"No, not at all," rejoins Mrs. Marblemug. "If I read anything, it would be morbid literature. My taste is unhealthy. That's another of my vices."

"My dear madam, you amaze—you alarm me,—you do indeed!" cries Mr. Oily, waving his hand in graceful deprecation and polite horror.

"Don't," says Mrs. Marblemug; "you'll knock down some of the wine-glasses, and hurt yourself. You had better keep your hand quiet,—you had, indeed. No; I have given up reading, because all books do me harm—the best—the healthiest. Your books even, I suppose, I ought to say; but I can't, because I see through compliments, and despise my own, of course, as much as other people's! Suppose, we say, I don't read, because books do me harm—and leave it there. The thing is not worth pursuing. You think it is? Well, then, books do me harm, because they increase my tendency to be envious (one of my worst vices). The better the book is the more I hate the man for being clever enough to write it—so much cleverer than me, you know, who couldn't write it at all. I believe you call that Envy. Whatever it is, it has been one of my vices from a child. No, no wine—a little water. I think wine nasty, that's another of my vices—or, no, perhaps, that is only one of my misfortunes. Thank you. I wish I could talk to you about books; but I really can't read them—they make me so envious."

Perhaps Oily (who, as I infer from certain passages in his Memoirs, could be a sufficiently dogged and resolute man on occasions when his dignity was in danger) still valiantly declines to submit and be silent, and, shifting his ground, endeavours to draw Mrs. Marblemug out by asking her questions. The new effort, however, avails him nothing. Do what he will, he is always met and worsted by the lady in the same, quiet, easy, indifferent way; and, sooner or later, even his distinguished mouth is muzzled by Mrs. Marblemug, like the mouths of all the degenerate talkers of my own time whom I have ever seen in contact with her. Are Mr. Oily's biographers not to be depended on, or can it really be the fact that, in the course of all his long conversational career, that illustrious man never once met with a check in the shape of a Mrs. Marblemug? I have no tender prepossession in favour of the lady; but when I reflect on the character of Mr. Oily, as exhibited in his Memoirs, I am almost inclined to regret that he and Mrs. Marblemug never met. In relation to some people, I involuntarily regard her as a dose of strong moral physic; and I really think she might have done my distinguished countryman some permanent good.

To take another instance, there is the case of the once-brilliant social luminary, Mr. Endless—extinguished, unfortunately for the new generation, about the time when we were most of us only little boys and girls. What a talker this sparkling creature must have been, if one may judge by that racy anonymous publication (racy was, I think, the word chiefly used in reviewing the book by the critics of the period), Evenings with Endless. By A Constant Listener! "I could hardly believe," I remember the Listener writes, "that the world was the same after Endless had flashed out of this mortal scene. It was morning while he lived—it was twilight, or worse, when he died. I was very intimate with him. Often has the hand that writes these trembling lines smacked that familiar back—often have those thrilling and matchless accents syllabled the fond diminutive of my Christian name. It was not so much that his talk was ceaseless (though that is something), as that it moved incessantly over all topics from heaven to earth. His variety of subject was the most amazing part of this amazing man. His fertility of allusion to topics of the past and present alike was truly inexhaustible. He hopped, he skipped, he fluttered, he swooped, from theme to theme. The butterfly in the garden, the bee in the flower-bed, the changes of the kaleidoscope, the sun and shower of an April morning, are but faint emblems of him." With much more to the same eloquent purpose; but not a word from the first page to the last to hint even that Endless was ever

brought to a full stop, on any single occasion, by any one of the hundreds of enchanted listeners before whom he figured in his wonderful performances with the tongue from morning to night.

And yet, there must surely have been Talk-Stoppers in the world, in the time of the brilliant Endless—talk-stoppers, in all probability, possessing characteristics similar to those now displayed in society by my exasperating connection by marriage, Mr. Spoke Wheeler. It is impossible to say what the consequences might have been if my relative and Mr. Endless had ever come together. Mr. Spoke Wheeler is one of those men—a large class, as it appears to me—who will talk, and who have nothing whatever in the way of a subject of their own to talk about. His constant practice is to lie silently in ambush for subjects started by other people, to take them forthwith from their rightful owners, turn them coolly to his own uses, and then cunningly wait again for the next topic, belonging to somebody else, that passes within his reach. It is useless to give up, and leave him to take the lead—he invariably gives up, too, and declines the honour. It is useless to start once more, hopefully, seeing him apparently silenced—he becomes talkative again the moment you offer him the chance of seizing on your new subject—disposes of it without the slightest fancy, taste, or novelty of handling, in a moment—then relapses into utter speechlessness as soon as he has silenced the rest of the company by taking their topic away from them. Wherever he goes, he commits this social atrocity with the most perfect innocence and the most provoking good humour, for he firmly believes in himself as one of the most entertaining men who ever crossed a drawing-room or caroused at a dinner-table.

Imagine Mr. Spoke Wheeler getting an invitation to one of those brilliant suppers which assisted in making the evenings of the sparkling Endless so attractive to his friends and admirers. See him sitting modestly at the table with every appearance in his face and manner of being the most persistent and reliable of listeners. Endless takes the measure of his man, as he too confidently believes, in one bright glance—thinks to himself, Here is a new worshipper to astonish; here is the conveniently dense and taciturn human pedestal on which I can stand to let off my fireworks—plunges his knife and fork, gaily hospitable, into the dish before him (let us say a turkey and truffles, for Endless is a gastronome as well as a wit), and starts off with one of those "fertile allusions," for which he was so famous.

"I never carve turkey without thinking of what Madame de Pompadour said to Louis the Fifteenth," Endless begins in his most off-hand manner. "I refer to the time when the superb Frenchwoman first came to court, and the star of the fair Chateauroux waned before her. Who remembers what the Pompadour said when the king insisted on carving the turkey?"

Before the company can beg Endless, as usual, to remember for them, Mr. Spoke Wheeler starts into life and seizes the subject.

"What a vicious state of society it was in the time of Madame de Pompadour," he says, with moral severity. "Who can wonder that it led to the French Revolution?"

Endless feels that his first effort for the evening is nipped in the bud, and that the new guest is not to be depended on as a listener. He, however, waits politely, and every one else waits politely to hear something more about the French Revolution. Mr. Spoke Wheeler has not another word to say. He has snatched his subject—has exhausted it—and is now waiting, with an expectant smile on his face, to lay hands on another. Disastrous silence reigns, until Mr. Endless, as host and wit, launches a new topic in despair.

"Don't forget the salad, gentlemen," he exclaims. "The emblem, as I always fancy, of human life. The sharp vinegar corrected by the soft oil, just as the misfortune of one day is compensated by the luck of another. Heigho! let moralists lecture as they will, what a true gambler's existence ours is, by the very nature of it! Love, fame, wealth, are the stakes we all play for; the world is the table; Death keeps the house, and Destiny shuffles the cards. According to my definition, gentlemen, man is a gambling animal, and woman——" Endless pauses for a moment, and lifts the glass to his lips to give himself a bacchanalian air before he amazes the company with a torrent of eloquence on the subject of woman. Unhappy man! in that one moment Mr. Spoke Wheeler seizes on his host's brilliant gambling metaphor, and runs away with it as his own subject immediately.

"The worst of gambling," he says, with a look of ominous wisdom, "is, that when once a man takes to it, he can never be got to give it up again. It always ends in ruin. I know a man whose son is in the Fleet, and whose daughter is a maid-of-all-work at a lodging-house. The poor devil himself once had twenty thousand pounds, and he now picks up a living by writing begging-letters. All through gambling. Degrading vice, certainly, ruins a man's temper and health, too, as well as his property. Ah! a very degrading vice—very much so indeed!"

"I am afraid, my dear sir, you have no vices," says Endless, getting angry and sarcastic as a fresh pause follows this undeniable commonplace. "The bottle stands with you. Do you abjure even that most amiable of human failings—the cheerful glass? Ha!" exclaims Endless, seeing that his guest is going to speak again, and vainly imagining that he can cut him short this time. "Ha! what a debt we owe to the first man who dis-

covered the true use of the grape? How drunk he must have got in making his immortal preliminary experiments! How often his wife must have begged him to consider his health and his respectability, and give up all further investigations! How he must have shocked his family with perpetual hiccups, and puzzled the medical men of the period with incurable morning headaches! To the health of that marvellous, that magnificent, that inestimable human being, the first Toper in the world! The patriarchal Bacchus quaffing in his antediluvian vineyard! What a picture, gentlemen; what a subject for our artists! Scumble, my dear friend," continues Endless, breathlessly, feeling that Mr. Spoke Wheeler has got his topic again, and anxious to secure assistance in preventing that persistent gentleman from making any use of the stolen property—"Scumble, your pencil alone is worthy of the subject. Tell us, my prince of painters, how would you treat it?"

The prince of painters has his mouth full of turkey, and looks more puzzled than flattered by this complimentary appeal. He hesitates, and Mr. Spoke Wheeler darts into the conversation on the subject of drunkenness, forthwith; scatters Mr. Scumble's ideas, if he has any, on the pictorial treatment of the patriarchal Bacchus; stops the burst of eloquence on the topic of Art with which the brilliant Endless was about to delight the company; and produces a fresh pause, after having added to the conversational enjoyment of the evening by remarking that intoxication is very much on the increase, and that delirium tremens is, in the large majority of instances, an incurable complaint.

Will even the most indiscriminate of the surviving admirers of Endless, and of the great talkers generally, venture to assert that he, or they, could have shown off with the slightest approach to success in the company of Mr. Spoke Wheeler, or of Mrs. Marblemug, or of Colonel Hopkirk, or of any of the other dozens on dozens of notorious talk-stoppers whose characters I refrain from troubling the reader with? Surely not! Surely I have quoted examples enough to prove the correctness of my theory that the days when the eminent professors of the Art of Conversation could be sure of perpetually-attentive audiences, have gone by. Instead of mourning over the loss of the great talkers, we ought to feel relieved (if we have any real regard for them, which I sometimes doubt) by their timely departure from the scene. Between the members of the modern generation who would not have listened to them, the members who could not have listened to them, and the members who would have confused, interrupted, and cut them short, what extremities of compulsory silence they must have undergone if they had lasted until our time! Our case may be lamentable enough in not having heard them; but how much worse would theirs be if they came back to the world now, and tried to show us how they won their reputations!

UNDER-WATER EXISTENCE.

The wrack, or seaweed, thrown up by the tide at high water-mark is often full of sand-hoppers. When the tidal waves disturb them, they leap about in swarms, and look like a creeping mist. As the edges of the waves ripple among the wrack, they bound a foot high into the air, and form a line of dancing mist upon the sandy shore, receding with the ebbing, and advancing with the flowing, tides. Sand-hoppers have been called sea-fleas, although they have not the wings which aid the leaps of their namesakes. Feeding upon decaying organic matter, their habitat is the wrack. When the wrack is left high and dry upon the beach, great numbers of these little crusted animals are found under it. When the wrack is caught in the highest rock-pools, these tiny crustaceans skip about at the surface of the water with surprising agility. Having feet adapted both for leaping and swimming, they are called amphipoda. However, their swimming is rather skipping on their sides in the shallow water than swimming. These Lilliputian shrimps can leap up into the air twenty times, and skip under the surface of the water at a bound, forty times their own length. At the bases of their feet are leaf-like gills: hence they are called gill-feet, or branchiopoda. Every lofty leap in the air, and every sidelong skip in the water, gives them oxygen to revive their blood in an extraordinary degree. The thorax consists of six or seven segments, with a pair of feet to each segment. The gill-feet have mouths furnished with jaws and a pair of jaw-feet. The female is provided with appendages for keeping her egg under her body. The gill-feet of the wrack most common upon the coasts of the British channel are called by the savans, Talitrus saltator and Orchestia. Talitrus saltator is a translation into Latin of the French popular name, chiquenaude, the animal who jumps with a fillip, or movement like a jerk of the finger let go from the thumb. Orchestia signifies the violent little fellow. Orchestia is distinguished from his comrade Talitrus by a claw-like hand at the end of his second pair of feet. The fillip-jumper and the violent-bounder can both hide themselves in the sand in a trice. Wherever they are—in the sand, or under the wrack, or in the highest pools, and whatever may be their names, gill-feet, sand-bounders, side-skippers, fillip-jumpers, or violent agitators—the wrack shrimps are always the neighbours of the sea-acorns, limpets, and periwinkles.

The periwinkles, like their comrades the limpets, forsake their brown pastures, and betake themselves to the dry rocks, when the ground-swell announces a storm. Periwinkle

is petty-wrinkle made harmonious; and in the streets we hear it in the short and practical form of the cry, Periwink—periwink. Sabot, or little wooden shoe, is the name which the French give to the periwinkle—a name suggested by a rough resemblance. The learned name given by Ferussac, Littorina littoralis, means merely that this shell-fish lives upon the coast. The Linnæan name Turbo signifies a twisted shell; and the Saxon name has a similar signification, meaning something awry and wrinkled. The French, who are not at all happy in calling the periwinkle a sabot, hit off his description better when they call him a snail with a round mouth. There are white, yellow, brown, and red periwinkles. There are kinds of periwinkles the mouths of whose shells cause them to be called the silver-mouthed and the golden-mouthed (argyrostomos and chrysostomos), as if they were eloquent fathers of the church. There is a crowned periwinkle—of course there is! The zig-zag periwinkle is a very pretty dark blue one, with white zig-zag streaks. Indeed, there are nearly a hundred different kinds of them, of which about eighty are living and fifteen are fossil species. I have read in books concerning periwinkles which forsake the shore and the rocks, the tangles and the sea-girdles, and betake themselves to the trees and fields. It is by night that they are said to seek the change of green for brown pastures. There is nothing common or mean in nature, the commonness and meanness being in ignorant human minds; and the periwinkle, when his genus is studied, inspires every kind of interest.

There is greatness in periwinkles. Their endurance of all climates and all weathers is wonderful. The periwinkle is the conchylion of the breakers. Inhabiting all shores and defying all weathers, he loves especially to be wetted by the spray of the tidal waves. He places himself where he can receive the breakers, having a structure adapted to such a habitat. The perfectly round mouth of his thick globose shell has a horny lid, and he breathes through a pair of comb-like gills. M. Deshayes was astonished at the endurance of Littorina littoralis in Africa. All the year round, every vicissitude of season, the spring and autumn torrents, and the heats of summer, when the waves seldom reached the rocks, were all bravely and wonderfully borne by the defiant little periwinkles. When human feet cannot walk upon hot rocks scorched by the sun of the tropics, the periwinkles endure the roasting with impunity. Dr. Harvey, of Dublin, found a kind of periwinkle, Littorina rudis, two hundred feet up among the sea-cliffs of the West of Ireland, in pools of spray and rain water. There, their shells had become thinner, and the grooves between the spires deeper than usual.

The common periwinkle, like the common limpet, is universally eaten; and these conchylions are companions in the olive zone. upon the rocks, and in human stomachs. Coast boys everywhere around the British islands employ their Saturday afternoons in summer time in finding and roasting periwinkles. "Dazz ye," the Devonshire boys say, "isn't it fine fun? " When work and school are over, the boys are allowed "to go a-picking 'winkles." They separate into a party which gathers the winkles, and a party which kindles a fire of drift-wood and sea-weeds. The lid of an old tin kettle, resting upon stones, is soon heated. When the shells crack, the winkles are cooked. Every good boy brings home a lot in the corner of his apron to regale his family on the Sunday.

The brown pastures of the plant-eating limpets and winkles are honoured with the presence of the animal-eating purpura and nassa. Diplomacy has established the rule that respect is to be measured by the power of destruction, and consequently peculiar deference is due to conchylions who can devour their fellow-creatures. No sly fling was intended at the imperial purple, I suppose, when the white whelk was called purpura. The Greeks and Romans did not conceal a sarcasm in a fable when they said a dog's lips were dyed purple after eating the mollusks of these shells. Purpura and nassa are armed with a spiny and augur-like tongue, which pierces the shells of their victims.

The animal and shell of purpura resemble the whelk. The purpura makes the transition between the buccinum and the murex. The white whelks, I repeat it in English, are the link between the Whelk kind and the Venus's Comb kind of shell-fish. The Venus's Comb can dissolve the spines of the comb whenever it is necessary to enlarge the shell. The mantles of all the conchylions secrete their shells; only a few species, however, are known to possess the power of dissolving them. M. Deshayes says, the murex and the purpura have the property of making the tubercles disappear which they had secreted some time previously. The white whelks are found in all seas. In the Australian seas the species are numerous, while in the northern seas there are only four or five of them.

The fishermen call the nassa the dog-whelk. As for the name nassa, it seems to have been derived from the resemblance of the shell to the twisted willow handle of a net used by fishermen. The animal part of the dog-whelk is much flattened, with a locomotive extending outwards beyond the shell in all directions, especially in front, where it is large and angular, while it narrows behind. When the sand conchylions, called mactra, quit their burrows, the nassa pounce upon them, pierce their thin angular shells, and extract the flesh through the aperture. The siphon of the nassa is seen behind his pair of long feelers, about the middle of which are his eyes.

Nassa, purpura, patella, and littorina, are species separated from their numerous kindred upon the tropical shores. The egg-clusters of these conchylions were at some remote period, perhaps, borne to northern shores by the currents of the ocean. Naturalists have erred in nothing more than in the multiplication of species; and it may be, that the common conchylions of our coasts are only the dwarfs of their families and kin, stunted, degraded, and coarsened by the hungry cold of northern seas.

The purple anemones are neighbours of the limpets and periwinkles, white whelks and dog-whelks. Country cousins are sure when taken to the olive zone, to ask for the sea flowers, the animal flowers. Books written by compilers from books, tell them the purple flower may be seen ornamenting the rocks, when the sea retires. When they search among the rocks at low water for the purple anemone, they find, in snug, out-of-the-way nooks, only little leathery, purple balls. However curious, the purple balls seem but slightly ornamental. I have known the disappointment confirm the generalisation of perfidy, which country folks carry in their minds against town and coast-folks. When the tide is out the beauty of most of the rayed animals, or actinia, is hidden. The feelers, which form the flowers, are pursed together. On a first visit to the brown zone, the observer is sure to try and take up the droll little purple balls, and finding them alive, men start, and ladies scream. When the base is torn from the rock, the water is squeezed out, which the animal had stored up for its refreshment, while exposed to the sun. A little research in the rock chasms is sure to turn the disappointment into surprise and delight. The expanded animal flowers are to be seen in deep pools, overshadowed by rock ledges, and festooned by laminaria. The pool is divided into sunshine and shadow, and the sea-flower is not seen in the sunny part, among the green ulva, and purple stony plants. The sea anemone, which is called anemone, from its resemblance to the spring flower, is seen in full blow under the water, just where the animal can remain in the shade, while its feelers enjoy the sunshine. An expanded animal flower seems to display a corolla of blue petals, set in a calyx of purple sepals. The sea anemone is like a purple cup, with the lips bevelled outwards into a crown of tentacles, and encircled with an inner rim of blue beads. The rayed animal of the olive zone, is the least remarkable of its group, yet young people, who rush over the rocks to see it, for the first time, forget the bumping and tumbling among the fuci, which it generally costs them, in the delight of seeing a creature so strangely beautiful.

Sea anemones sometimes take a fancy to ride upon coaches. Observers upon the coasts find other food for laughter than is supplied by their own mishaps. Strange, droll, beautiful, wonderful things abound in the sea, and even comic incidents occur occasionally. The notorious soldier crab, pagurus, is sometimes seen ensconced up to the thorax in the shell of a whelk, with a little brown anemone upon it. Like boys who have got up behind a coach, the anemones have a drive without expense. The base of the anemone is ill-formed for rapid locomotion; and, desiring to change the feeding ground of his unwieldy body, he takes a cab. Probably he is in the way of pleasant mouthfuls when upon the shell, which the rapacious soldier-crab drags about on the sea-shore. Something savoury will come in the way of the tentacles of the anemone, when the pagurus has whipped an unwary mussel, or oyster, out of his shell. Pagurus shelters his abdomen in a shell he never secreted. His circulatory system (which Mr. Milne Edwards calls lacunary, because it runs through the lacunes, or interstices) of his organs, is such, that a simple wound in his abdomen would make him bleed to death; and this abdomen is naked. Like man, he must obtain a vestment or perish. Apparently, the sea anemone knows this as well as Mr. Edwards, and, as an example of practical zoology, makes pagurus his cab-horse. The soldier crab cannot whip behind. The removal of his shabby fare would involve the extraction of his abdomen, and the risking of his life. The exhilaration of the fresh air, may have much to do with it; but the appearance of the martial pagurus with his cab and his fare in a sandy hollow, excites a shout of laughter from grave naturalists, rivalling the effects which the first somerset of clown in a Christmas pantomime produces in the rising generation.

Pagurus does not rival clown every day. The sudden apparition of young plaice, or flounders, is a more frequent incident in the sandy pools of the Laminarian zone. Whether looking down from a boat through the glassy green water, or wading in the pools, it is always with agreeable surprise that the observer sees the sand apparently becoming animated, and the flat fish emerging into light from the little sand-cloud, and after flitting across the bottom, as if skimming the sand, burrowing into it, and disappearing. As the side swimmers glide rapidly over the ribbed sand, they seem to change colour like the chameleon. Linnæus called them the side-swimmers (pleuronectes), because they swim upon their sides. The under side is white, and the upper side is dark and variegated, with dull colours analogous to the colours of the chameleon. Proximity to white objects brightens the bright, and to dark objects darkens the dull colours on the flat side of the fish. The colours and the light, both being chequered, the changing hues of the fish astonish the observer. Chameleons have never shown me this phenomenon with the surpris-

ing distinctness of the side-swimmers. The effect of an apparition of plaice in a sandy pool, is comparable to the surprise given by wrens, or tom-tits, when they flit across the path of a lonely wood. The play of colours heightens the effect. Just such a coloration is needed by them to enable them to escape the observation of their enemies, and make it difficult to distinguish them from the sand plants, or stones, near them. The young side-swimmers are symmetrical, while the old have their necks twisted until both eyes are upon the dark, or uppermost side. According to the simple physiology of the Scottish fishermen, side-swimmers wring their necks by their long and anxious lookings upward for their food and their enemies.

An incident, which surpasses in interest all the others in the olive zone, is of constant occurrence, the squirtings of pholades. As the tide recedes, sand and water are seen in all directions spurting up a foot high into the air. When a novice commences a scientific investigation into the cause of these mysterious spurtings by putting his finger into the hole, a fierce squirt of sand and sea-water, three or four feet high, bespatters his face, and blinds his eyes.

No question in conchyliology has been more keenly discussed for centuries, than the puzzle how the pholades perforate the rocks? Overimpressed with a just admiration of the marvellous secretions of the mantle of the mollusks, learned conchyliologers maintained it was by means of a dissolving acid unknown to chemistry. In eighteen hundred and fifty-one, an amateur exhibited half a score of pholades in the Pavilion, Brighton, before the Provincial Medical Association, perforating lumps of chalk by mechanical operations. Every witness could see the rotations of the valves as rasps, and the squirtings of the branchial siphon as a syringe. Dr. Mantell as the mouth-piece of the numerous spectators, exclaimed, "Mechanically after all!"

The old English students of shells called the hole-lurker, or pholas, the stone-piercer, but there are many conchylions which bore stones, and the pholas perforates chalk, sand-stone, gneiss, and wood. Restrict the genus of the Hole-hides (the word is the exact translation of the Greek pholadidæ, and in using the word hide, to signify the one who hides, I follow the excellent usage of the children in the game of hide-and-seek), restrict the genus of the hole-hides as we may, by the exclusion of gastrochenes, myæ, solens, fistulanes, and cloissonaires, there will still remain considerable variety in the ancient genus pholas. There will remain pholades, whose valves remind one of the spiny leaves of the acanthus, with which the ancient Greeks adorned the capitals of their Corinthian columns, and copies of which were embroidered upon their richest robes. The monster pholades from the Molucca Islands will remain, whose shells alone are known, and whose animals and habits are entirely unknown. But the most singular of all are the spherical pholades, which, in size and roundness, are bigger than cricket-balls.

It was on the pholas dactylus (the finger-like hole-hide, which is most common upon our coasts) that the physiology of the pholades was discovered. Professor Flourens taught it to his class at the Jardin des Plantes, in eighteen hundred and fifty-three; and an account of it appeared in the Journal de la Conchyliologie in the same year. M. Emile Blanchard describes it minutely, and illustrates it with splendid plates, in a recent livraison of his vast and admirable work—L'Organization du Règne Animal.

The pholas is a living combination of three instruments: he is a hydraulic apparatus, a rasp, and a syringe. Working in a narrow hole, under water, the pressure of the water, which is proportional to the depth and narrowness of the hole, gives him, at will, the command of a powerful hydraulic force. His two siphons are united into one tube, and by sucking in water with the one, and blowing out air with the other, he establishes currents in the water, which float food into the mouth, or among the tentacles of the prisoner in his hole. To the hole-hide, his hydraulic apparatus is, what his spinning machinery is to the spider; and the currents serve the mollusk as the web serves the arachnida in the capture of his food.

The pholas is a rasp. His valves look like two bits broken off from the end of a rasp. When examined under the microscope, the shell is seen to be a collection of crystallised chalk, covered by a thin organic membrane or skin. The shell is thick, and the teeth on it are strong and sharp at the lower extremity. Inside the shell are two little levers. The muscular system of the pholas explains how the double rasp is brought to bear upon the sides of the hole. The organ which the anatomists have called a foot is really a motor or moving power. Issuing from the wide opening at the lower end of the shell, the motor-foot presses against the side of the hole, the muscles which command the levers are successively contracted and distended, and the valves rasp by demi-rotations. The machinery consists of a motor, ropes, levers, and rasps. M. Blanchard's beautiful plates of the pholas dactylus illustrate all this strikingly. But several difficulties remain to be explained. How does the pholas get rid of the raspings? and how did he first get into the rock? The answer is—the pholade is a syringe. There is no doubt about it among the persons who have been blinded by his squirtings. The organ called a foot, the motor of the rotatory rasp, is the piston of the syringe. Resembling in shape a rose-leaf, the piston is capable of very sudden and very considerable expansion. When the raspings accumulate,

they are collected into the paleal cavity, a sort of petticoat over the piston, little vibratile hairs push them up the interior of the gill-siphon, and from thence the sudden distension of the piston ejects them in the form of little oblong nodules.

The only difficulty which remains, in regard to this species at least, is the first introduction of the pholade into the rock. When the growth of stones was an established doctrine in science, the savans classed the pholades with the frogs occasionally found alive in blocks of marble. The discovery a century ago of pholades in the pillars of the temple of Serapis, at Naples, destroyed this notion. Ever since, the question has been a puzzle and a mystery. Since eighteen hundred and fifty-one, the problem has been solved with scientific certainty. The gelatinous egg-clusters, or spat of the pholades, is thrown upon the rocks by the female. After a day or two, the eggs separate and become larves, and each chooses a convenient site for his habitation. When the site is chosen and the shell is strong enough, the pholade, barely visible to the naked eye—a creature the size of a big pin's head—fastens his foot upon the rock, and the rasping, squirting, and hydraulic machines begin the work of life.

No doubt the explanations which are satisfactory in regard to the dactyle pholades cannot be received in regard to the spherical pholades. Wonderful differences of structure like these must entail corresponding modifications of the perforating machinery.

The pholade zone is inhabited by the mussels. The zones, I submit to elder and better naturalists, ought to be characterised zoologically by fixed animals, as they are botanically by fixed plants. For want of this guiding rule, animals have been ascribed to particular zones, which wander over all. In the brown laminarian, or pholade zone, multitudinous colonies of mussels may be seen moored to the breaker-lashed brows of rocks. The presence of the plant-eating conchylions is accounted for by the botanical, and of the animal-eating, by the zoological features of the zone. The white whelk, the imperial purpura, lords it over the subject populations of the mussel banks. Naturalists say the mussels prefer the exposed brows of the rocks because they love the shock and dash of the breakers. The mussels have a better reason. The bluffest points are the only habitats where they can escape the augur-like tongues of the white whelks. Clothed in the white of innocence, the purpura lurk among the roots of the tangles and sea-girdles, watching for opportunities of piercing the shells and sucking the blood of the mussel colonies. Shelled oligarchs of the shore, the white whelks wish to enjoy as much prey and encounter as few breakers as possible. Hence, the mussel colonies can thrive only on rock-ledges where the purpura are afraid to venture. To do them justice, the white whelks chamfer or drill the holes in the shells of their victims very beautifully; the mussels, however, have the bad taste to dislike it, and get out of the way of it. It is in this way life goes on in the pholade zone. There are egg-clusters in elegant and tiny urns attached to stones, and there are egg-clusters in gelatinous splatches upon the brows of rocks. These are the destroyers and the destroyed in the condition studied by embryology. There are armed and adult conchylions prowling in search of victims, and there are defenceless and adult conchylions braving the billows maddened by the blasts, to escape their enemies. These are the destroyers and the destroyed in the condition studied by conchyliology. It is with animals as it is with men. When the student of topography searches into the reason why cities have grown up in particular sites, he generally finds the causes which determined the choice of the site were proximity to food and security from enemies. Reasons similarly instinctive determine the habitats of the spray acorns, the wrack shrimps, the tangle winkles, and the breaker-lashed mussels. The principle salus populi reigns wherever there is life.

I never could find out how long the pholades live, and whether they die, or are cut off by shocking accidents. The holes of dead pholades are full of sand. The entrances of the holes become the favourite abodes of the heart-like shells, cockles or cardiaceæ. When the shells of the pholades are taken out of their holes, the dingy blue colour of the living shells has vanished, and they have become singularly fragile and beautifully white. All dead shells, indeed, found on the shore are perfectly white and clean. Shell-fish which have died in my possession have quite another appearance; and the difference is due, I suspect, to the voracious activity of the flat-worms.

I have seen heart-shells, or cardiaceæ, of the Venus kind, take up their abodes in the mouths of the holes of the pholades. Venus is nearly round or oval, and her bombed shells fit in neatly into the mouths of the holes. She possesses the powers of locomotion in a very limited degree. If a man were to lose both his legs, and to have his left arm cut off, he would have to drag himself about by means of his right arm. The locomotion of Venus is similar. The animal or goddess stretches out her foot or arm, and when it adheres to the rock or sand, drags her shell after it. When she finds a hole she sweeps out the sand, scrapes the edge of the hole a little to fix her lower valve, and spins a gelatinous cable to moor herself within it more securely. Now she is comfortable, and feeding is henceforth her chief business. She lies with her upper valve raised, and the water brings her food to her siphons. When she is hungry she makes

currents in the water, like the pholades, and brings her food within the reach of her bearded feelers.

The cockles resemble the veneraciæ in their habits. The resemblance, when viewed sidewise, to hearts of all the cardiaceæ, explains the Latin name. Cardium and the Venus owe their name to the mythological ideas of the ancient naturalists. Cockles stilt upon their locomotive, as gentlemen do who make stilts of their walking-sticks when leaping. This movement accounts for the derivation of the name cockles. After hopping or stilting upon it rapidly, he digs with it deftly, and skill and practice are necessary to catch him before he can bury himself in the sand. Difficulties have been imagined respecting the means by which the cockle excavates his burrow in the sand. The distension of his narrow tapering foot is necessary to enable him to do it. His foot, say certain anatomists, is distended by means of a tube which opens near his mouth, and runs along the organ, arm, locomotive, or spade, usually called a foot. There is no such tube. The distension of the feet of cardium, pholas mytelus, and their like, is performed by the organ called the hyaline style. Anybody who, instead of eating the first cockle which comes to table, will open the foot of it by a cut of a penknife, will see clearly the structure of the foot. Running along it inside, he will find an elastic gelatinous spring. Prior to eighteen hundred and fifty-one, the use of this gelatinous spring was entirely unknown. It is the distender of the foot. This instrument is the distender of the locomotive. This gelatinous spring gives its elasticity and flexibility to the organ with which the animal burrows in the sand. On taking a cockle out of spirit to dissect it, I discovered the origin of the error that the distension is effected by water entering a tube. The specimen, although only a year in the alcohol, did not contain the hyaline style. The alcohol had dissolved it, and the void resembled a water-tube. The anatomist who would escape mistakes, must dissect his subjects the instant after death, and before

"decay's effacing fingers"

have obliterated the divine inscriptions upon the tablets of life.

On picking up dead shellfish, a frightful procession of flat-worms is often seen issuing out of them, having been interrupted in their work of cleaning the seaside shells. Flat, white, oval creatures, with fierce black eyes and gaping mouths, when seen through a magnifying glass, they look sufficiently formidable little monsters. The flat-worms or planaria possess some of the most extraordinary endowments known in the worlds of life. Sir John Dalyel was for a long time the only British authority for the fact of the divisibility of life in the flat-worms. M. Baer confirmed his observations, and M. Duges of Montpellier discovered something like polarisation in the physiology of the flat-worms. When cut off, the tail of a planaria, after recovering from its astonishment, finds out the direction taken by the body, and follows it with accuracy and speed.

CHIP.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND THE OLD MASTERS.

In a recent number of this journal, we endeavoured, in an article called "To Think, or Be Thought For?" * to induce our readers to form their own opinions on pictures—especially in the case of pictures by Old Masters, which might come under their observation. And we ventured, at the same time, to own that we doubted the sense and usefulness of the principle upon which the national picture-money is at present expended in stocking the National Gallery with works of Art. Our heretical opinions on this latter point, have lately received a curious and unexpected confirmation in the shape of a letter from Mr. William Stirling (a recognised authority in matters of Art), which has been published in the columns of a weekly contemporary, and which we beg permission briefly to refer to in this place.

The subject of the letter is a well-known picture in the National Gallery, which is described as a Boar Hunt, by Velasquez, and the object of the writer is to settle how much of this picture has been done by the dead Spaniard, Velasquez, and how much by the living Englishman (and skilled artist), Mr. Lance. On this point, Mr. Stirling, the constituted authority, and Mr. Lance, the skilled artist, are at issue. Mr. Lance states before a Committee of the House of Commons, that he had made many extensive repairs in the picture, and instances, as one of the chief of these, the painting of a group of mules in the foreground, "out of his own head." To this startling statement he afterwards adheres publicly, in a printed letter; adding that, when he was before the picture in the National Gallery, several of the committee (apparently quite incapable of distinguishing for themselves, which was old painter's work, and which was new), asked him, by two or three at a time (so eager was their thirst for knowledge), and pointing all over the picture (so bewildered were they as to the real extent of the repairs), "Did you do this, Mr. Lance? Did you do that, Mr. Lance?"—and so on. Mr. Lance, an interval of twenty years having elapsed since he made the canvas presentable to the public eye, is naturally unable to identify every touch of his modern brush on the ancient picture. One thing, however, he can tell the committee with certainty—that he did six weeks' work upon it.

* See page one hundred and ninety-three of the present volume.

What does the paying British public think of its bargain?—a work by an old master which requires to be painted on for six weeks by a modern artist before it can be presented to the popular gaze. What a lucky people we are, and how well our constituted authorities employ the national resources!

But we must not forget Mr. Stirling. Mr. Stirling's point is—not at all that the picture was originally purchased in such a decently genuine condition, as to need only the ordinary cleansing from dirt, and the after coating of varnish, to which its age might fairly entitle it—but how much did Mr. Lance do of it? For this purpose, he sends to Madrid for a tracing of a copy of the picture, executed by Goza—that tracing only extending to the portion of the work on which Mr. Lance alleged that the most important of his many "repairs" had been made. By the evidence thus obtained, Mr. Stirling finds out that Mr. Lance has greatly exaggerated the extent of bare canvas which he says he covered, that the group in the restored picture agrees with that in Goza's copy, but that variations occur in the details. Where Velasquez (on the evidence of the copy) painted horses, Mr. Lance has painted mules (a slight variation, this!); where Velasquez painted a man showing a hand out of a cloak, Mr. Lance has painted a man showing a hand and a leg; where Velasquez painted a man on foot turning his back on the spectator, Mr. Lance has painted a man on horseback prancing towards the spectator. Thus, the only question between Mr. Stirling and Mr. Lance is a question of quantity. Mr. Stirling disputes (on the evidence of the tracing from the copy), that so much has been done to the picture "out of Mr. Lance's own head," as Mr. Lance himself alleges. Of the extent to which Mr. Stirling himself admits that Mr. Lance has distinctly, with his own modern brush, worked upon and changed the old picture, we have enabled the reader to judge. To an unlearned apprehension, the admitted transformation which the picture has undergone, at the hands of Mr. Lance, appears something simply astounding. Astounding in every point of view. Astounding, when we remember that this picture—in which old horses have been turned into modern mules, in which a man on horseback does duty vice a man on foot, resigned—was purchased with the national money as a genuine article by constituted authorities who profess to be judges of the genuineness of pictures. Astounding, also, as showing the shameless dishonesty of the man, or men, who sold this piece of patchwork for a work of Velasquez. Were we so very hasty and wrong, a few weeks back, when we said that the national-picture money was occasionally spent for the confusion of the nation?

We have waited, before writing these lines, to ascertain if Mr. Lance would make any rejoinder to Mr. Stirling's letter. He has been silent, and Mr. Stirling enjoys the privilege of having said the triumphant last word. He speaks it in a perfectly moderate and gentlemanlike manner—but his evident incapability of perceiving the conclusions to which his own admissions lead, is, to say the least of it, not a little amazing.

THE FAITHFUL MIRROR.

I am but thy faithful mirror:
All the merit I may boast,
Is that I reflect thine image
Dimly, truthfully, at most.
When thou'rt near me I am like thee,
Thou dost love me—I am fair;
When thou'rt absent all is darkness,
Blank and lifeless—nothing there!

I am but thy faithful echo,
Voiceless, tuneless, when alone;
Thou dost love my words and accents:
They are sweet—they are thine own.
Crowds, enraptured, stay to hear me,
Think there's music in the air;
But, till thou didst wake the echo,
All was silent—nothing there.

I am clay, and thou art God-like;
Thou hast framed me to thy will—
Fashioned me to grace and beauty
With thy matchless artist skill.
Thou hast made the statue human—
I am good, and wise, and fair;
If thou shouldst withhold thy magic,
All is earthly—nothing there!

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

I PASS THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, AND TAKE MY FIRST RUSSIAN WALK.

Schinderhannes, the renowned robber of the Rhine, once encountered, so the story goes, in a foraging expedition between Mayence and Frankfort, a caravan of a hundred and fifty Jews. It was a bitter January night: snow twelve inches deep on the ground, and Schinderhannes didn't like Jews. And so, in this manner, did he evilly entreat them. He did not slay them, nor skin them, nor extract their teeth, as did King John; but he compelled every man Moses of them to take off his boots or shoes. These he mixed, pell-mell, into a leathern salad, or boot-heap, and at day-break, but not before, he permitted the poor frost-bitten rogues to find their chaussures, if they could. Setting aside the super-human difficulty of picking out one's own particular boots among three-hundred foot coverings, the subtle Schinderhannes had reckoned, with fiendish ingenuity, on the natural acquisitiveness of the Jewish race. Of course every Hebrew instinctively sought for the boots with the best soles and upper-leathers, and stoutly claimed them as his own; men who had never possessed anything better than a pair of squashy pumps, down at heel, and bulging at the sides, vehemently declared themselves the rightful owners of brave jack-

boots with trjple rows of nails; and the real proprietors, showing themselves recalcitrant at this new application of the law of meum and tuum, the consequence was a frightful uproar and contention:—such a fighting and squabbling, such a shrieking and swearing in bad Hebrew and worse German, such a rending of gabardines and tearing of beards, and clawing of hooked noses, had never been in Jewry, since the days of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. A friend of mine told me that he once saw the same experiment tried in a Parisian violon, or lock-up house, after a bal-masqué. The incarcerated postillions du Longjumeau, titis, débardeurs, Robinson Crusoes, and forts de la halle becoming uproarious and kicking at the iron-stanchioned door, the sergents de ville entered the cell, and unbooted every living prisoner. And such a scene there was in the morning in the yard of the poste, before the masqueraders went to pay their respects to the Commissary of Police, that Monsieur Gavarni might describe it with his pencil, but not I, surely, with my pen!

I have related this little apologue to illustrate the characteristic, but unpleasant, proceedings of the Russian custom-house officers, when we had given up our keys, in one of the white-washed cellars on the basement of a building on the INGLISKAIA NABEREJENAIA, or English Quay, and when those officials proceeded to the examination of our luggage. Either they had read Mr. Leitch Ritchie's Life of Schinderhannes, or they had an intuitive perception of the modus agendi of the Robbers of the Rhine, or they had some masonic sympathy with the Parisian police agents; for such a turning up of boxes and turning out of their contents, and mixture of their severalties, pell-mell, higgledy-piggledy, helter-skelter, jerry-cum-tumble, butter upon bacon, topsy-turvy, muck, mess, and muddle, I never saw in my life. There was a villainous douanier, who held a band-box under one arm, and seemed desirous of emulating the popular hat-trick of Herr Döbler; for he kept up a continual cascade of gloves, collars, eau-de-Cologne bottles, combs, hair-brushes, guide-books, pin-cushions, and lace cuffs, till I turned to look for the accomplice who was supplying him with fresh band-boxes. Now, the custom-house officers of every nation I have yet travelled through, have a different manner of examining your luggage. Your crusty, phlegmatic, Englishman turns over each article separately but carefully. Your stupid Belgian rummages your trunk, as if he were trying to catch a lizard; your courteous Frenchman either lightly and gracefully turns up your fine linen, as though he were making a lobster salad, or—much more frequently—if you tell him you have nothing to declare, and are polite to him, just peeps into one corner of your portmanteau, and says, C'est assez! Your sententious German ponders deeply over your trunk, pokes his fat fore-finger into the bosom of your dress-shirts, and motions you to shut it again. But none of these peculiarities had the Russians. They had a way of their own. They twisted, they tousted, they turned over, they held writing-cases open, bottom upwards, and shook out the manuscript contents, like snow-flakes. They held up coats and shirts, and examined them like pawnbrokers. They fingered ladies' dresses like Jew clothesmen. They punched hats, and looked into their linings; passed Cashmere shawls from one to the other for inspection; opened letters, and tried to read their contents (upside down), drew silk stockings over their arms; held boots by the toes, and shook them; opened bottles, and closed them again with the wrong corks; left the impress of their dirty hands upon clean linen, and virgin writing-papers; crammed ladies' under-garments into gentlemen's carpet-bags, forced a boot-jack into the little French actress's reticule, dropped things under-foot, trod on them, tore them, and laughed, spilt eau-de-Cologne, greased silk with pomatum, forced hinges, sprained locks, ruined springs, broke cigars, rumpled muslin, and raised a cloud of puff-powder and dentifrice. And all this was done, perhaps not wantonly, perhaps only in ignorant savagery; but, with such a reckless want of the commonest care; with such a hideous vacarme of shouting, screaming, trampling, and plunging, that the only light I could view the scene in—besides the Schinderhannes one—was in the improbable event of Mr. and Mrs. KEELEY travelling through the country of the Patagonians, falling into a gigantic ambuscade, and having their theatrical wardrobe overhauled by those overgrown savages.

Yet I was given to understand that the search was by no means so strict as it had habitually been in former years. Special instructions had even been issued by the government, that travellers were to be subjected to as little annoyance and delay in passing through the custom-house as were possible. That some rigour of scrutiny is necessary, and must be expected, I am not going, for one moment, to deny: the great object of the search being to discover books prohibited by the censure, and Russian bank-notes—genuine or forged (for the importation, or exportation of even good notes is illegal, and severely punished). Touching the books, the Russian government is wise. Il est dans son droit. One volume of Mr. CARLYLE would do more harm to the existing state of things than millions of spurious paper roubles. Not, but what the most jealous watchfulness is justifiable in the detection of forged notes, and the prevention of the real ones leaving the country, as models for forgery. The paper currency is enormous; there is no-

thing very peculiar about the paper of the note, and, though its chalcography is sufficiently complicated, and the dreadful pains and penalties denounced against the forgers, and the holders of forged notes, are repeated no less than three times in successively diminishing Russian characters on the back; the last repetition being literally microscopic; it is all plain sailing in printing and engraving, and there are few clever English or French engravers, who would have any difficulty in producing an exact copy of the "Gossudaria Kredit-Billiet" of all the Russias. I have been told by government employés, and bankers' clerks, that they can detect a bad bank-note immediately and by the mere sense of touch; but I apprehend that the chief test of genuineness is in the state into which every note passes after it has been for any time in circulation: intolerable greasiness and raggedness. The mass of the people are so grossly ignorant, that the note might as well be printed in Sanskrit as in Russ for them: they cannot even decipher the figures, and it is only by the colour of the note that an Istvostchik or a Moujik is able to tell you its value.

Among the hecatomb of luggage that had been brought from the deck of the pyroscaph into this cave of Trophonius, I had looked for some time vainly, for anything belonging to me, one glimpse indeed I caught of my courier's bag, skimmering through the air like a bird, and then all resolved itself into anarchy, the confusion of tongues, and the worse confusion of wearing apparel again. My keys were of not much service, therefore, to the officer in charge of them; and it was of no use addressing myself to any of the douaniers or porters, for none of them spoke anything but Russ. At length I caught sight of a certain big black, trunk of mine groaning (to use a little freedom of illustration) under a pile of long narrow packing-cases (so long that they must have contained young trees, or stuffed giraffes), addressed to his excellency and highness, &c., Prince Gortchakoff; and, being plastered all over with double eagle brands and seals, were, I suppose, inviolable to custom-house fingers. I pointed to the big black trunk; I looked steadily at the custodian of my keys, and I slipped Petersens paper rouble (crumpled up very small) into his hand. The pink lid of his little grey eye trembled with the first wink I had seen in Russia; and, in another twinkling of that eye, my trunk was dragged from its captivity, and ready for examination. But there is a vicious key to that trunk which refuses to act till it has been shaken, punched, violently wrenched, and abusively spoken to; and while the officer, having exhausted the first, was applying the last mode of persuasion (in Russ) I availed myself of the opportunity to chink some of the serviceable Petersens copeck pieces in my closed hand. The key having listened to reason, my friend, with whom I was now quite on conversational terms, made a great show of examining my trunk: that is to say, he dived into it (so to speak) head foremost, and came up to the surface with a false collar in his teeth; but it was all cry and no wool, and I might have had a complete democratic and socialist library and half a million in spurious paper money for aught he knew or cared. Then I gave him some more copecks, and said something to him in English, which I think he didn't understand; to which he responded with something in Russ, which I am perfectly certain I didn't understand; and then he chalked my box, and let me go free—to be taken into custody, however, immediately afterwards. He even recovered my courier's bag for me, which an irate douanier had converted into a weapon of offence, swinging it by a strap in the manner of the Protestant Flail to keep off over-impatient travellers. Such an olla podrida as there was inside that courier's bag, when I came to examine it next morning!

I need scarcely say that I had no Russian paper money with me, either in my luggage or on my person; and I must admit, to the honour of the Russian custom-house, that we were exempted from the irritating and degrading ceremony of a personal search. That system is, I believe, by this time generally exploded on the continent—flourishing only in a rank and weedy manner in the half-contemptible, half-loathsome Dogane of Austrian Italy, and (now and then, when the officials are out of temper) at the highly important seaport of Dieppe in France. As for books, I had brought with me only a New Testament, a Shakspere and a Johnson's Dictionary. The first volume incurs no danger of confiscation in Russia. The Russians to every creed and sect save Roman Catholicism and that branch of Judaism to which I have previously alluded, are as contemptuously tolerant as Mahomedans. Russian translations of the Protestant version of the Bible are common; the volumes of the British and Foreign Bible Society are plentiful in St. Petersburg, and Russians of the better class are by no means reluctant to attend the worship of the Anglican Church, both in Moscow and Petersburg. But it is for the Romish communion, that the Russians have the bitterest hatred, and for which all the energy of their persecution is reserved. Tolerated to some extent in the two capitals—as, where there are so many foreigners, it must necessarily be—it is uniformly regarded with distrust and abhorrence by the Greek Church; and I do believe that, in a stress of churches, an orthodox Russian would infinitely prefer performing his devotions before a pot-bellied fetish from Ashantee, than before the jewelled shrine of our Lady of Loretto.

I think, on the whole, I passed through the custom-house ordeal rather easily than other-

wise. Far different was it with Miss Wapps, who, during the process of search, was a flesh sculptured monument of Giantess Despair, dovetailed with the three Furies blended into one. This uncomfortable woman had in her trunk—for what purpose it is impossible to surmise—the working model of a power-loom, or a steam-plough, or a thrashing-machine, or something else equally mechanical and inconvenient; and the custom-house officer, who evidently didn't know what to make of it, had caught his finger in a cogged wheel, had broken one of his nails, and was storming in a towering rage at Miss Wapps, in Russ; while she, in a rage quite overpowering his in volume, was objurgating him in English, till a superior official charged at Miss Wapps, Cossack fashion with a long pen, and conveyed her, clamouring, away.

Sundry red-bearded men, in crimson shirts and long white aprons, and with bare muscular arms, which would have been the making of them as artists' models in England, had been wrestling with each other and with me, both mentally and physically, for the honour of conveying my luggage to a droschky. But much more had to be done before I could be allowed to depart. All the passengers had to enter an appearance before a fat old gentleman in green, and bright buttons, who sat in a high desk like a pulpit, while a lean, long man, his subordinate, sate at another desk below him, like the parson's clerk. This fat old gentleman, who spoke English, French, and German wheezily but fluently, was good enough to ask me a few questions I had heard before: as my age, my profession, whether I had ever been in Russia before, and what might be my object in coming to Russia now? He entered my answers in a vast ledger, and then, to my great joy, delivered to me my beloved Foreign-office document, with the advice to get myself immatriculated without delay. Then I paid more copecks to a dirty soldier sitting at a table, who made "Muscovite, his mark," on my passport—for I do not believe he could write; then more copecks again to another policeman, who pasted something like a small pitch-plaster on my trunk; and then I struggled into a court-yard, where there was a crowd of droschkies; and, securing with immense difficulty two of these vehicles—one for myself and one for my luggage—was driven to the hotel where I had concluded to stop.

You have seen, in one of the panoramas that infest our lecture-halls, after painted miles of river, or desert, or mountain have been unrolled, to the tinkling of Madame Somebody on the piano, the canvas suddenly display the presentiment of a cheerful village, or a caravan of pilgrims, or an encampment of travellers, smoking and drinking under the green trees; then the animated picture is rolled away into limbo again, and the miles of mountain, or river, or desert, begin again.

So passed away the unsubstantial alliance of us thirty living travellers. We had walked, and talked, and eaten, and drunk together, and liked and disliked each other for three days and nights; and now we parted in the droschky-crowded yard, never to meet again. To revisit the same cities, perhaps, inhabit the same streets, the same houses, to walk on the same side of the pavement, even to remember each other often, but to meet again no more. So will it be, perchance, with Greater things in the beginning of the End; and life-long alliances and friendships which we vainly call lasting, be reckoned merely as casual travelling companionships—made and broken in a moment in the long voyage that will last eternal years.

I am incorrigible. If you want a man to explore the interior of Australia, or to discover the North-West Passage, or the sources of the Niger, don't send me. I should come back with a sketch of Victoria Street, Sydney, or the journal of a residence in Cape Coast Castle, or notes of the peculiarities of the skipper of a Hull whaler. If ever I write a biography it will be the life of John Smith; and the great historical work which is to gild, I hope, the evening of my days will be a Defence of Queen Elizabeth from the scandal unwarrantably cast upon her, or an Account of the death of Queen Anne. Lo! I have spent a summer in Russia; and I have nothing to tell you of the Altai Mountains, the Kirghese tribes, Chinese Tartary, the Steppes, Kamschatka, or even the Czar's coronation. [I fled the country a fortnight before it took place.] I have learnt but two Russian cities [it is true I know my lesson by heart], St Petersburg and Moscow; and my first-fruit of Petersburg is that withered apple the Nevskoï-Perspective. You know all about it already, of course. I can't help it.

In Brussels my first visit is always to the Manneken. On arriving in Paris I always hasten, as fast as my legs can carry me, to the Palais Royal; I think I have left a duty unaccomplished in London when I come to it after a long absence, if I delay an hour in walking down the central avenue of Covent Garden Market. These are cari luoghi to me, and to them I must go. I have not been twenty minutes established in Petersburg, before I feel that I am due on the Nevskoï; that the houses are waiting for me there; that the Nevskoïans are walking up and down, impatient for me to come and contemplate them. I make a mental apology for keeping the Nevskoï waiting, in order to indulge in a warm bath; after which I feel as if I had divested myself of about one of the twelve layers of dust that seem to have been accumulating on my epidermis since I left London. Then I refect myself inwardly with my first Russian dinner; and, then, magnanimously disdaining the aid of a valet de place, or even of a droschky-driver; quite ignorant of Russ, and not knowing my right hand from

my left in the way of Russian streets; I set boldly forth to find out the Nevskoï.

It is about seven in the evening. I walk, say three-quarters of a mile, down the big street in which my hotel is situated. Then I find myself in a huge triangular place, of which the quays of the Neva form one side, with an obelisk in the midst. I touch my hat to a bearded man in big boots, and say "Nevskoï?" inquiringly. He takes off his hat, smiles, shows his teeth, makes a low bow, and speaks about a page of small pica in rapid Russ. I shake my head, say No bono, Johnny, (the only imbecile answer I can call up after the torrent of the unknown tongue,) and point to the right and to the left alternately, and with inquiring eyebrows. The bearded man points to the right—far away to the right, which I conjecture must be the other side of the river. "Na Prava," I think he says. I discover afterwards, that Na Pravo (the o pronounced as a French a) does mean to the right. To the right about I go, confidently.

I cross a handsome bridge of stone and wrought iron, on which stands a chapel, before whose shrine crowds of people of all classes are standing or kneeling, praying, and crossing themselves devoutly. When I am on the other side of the bridge, and standing in a locality I have already been introduced to—the English quay—I accost another man, also in beard and boots, and repeat my monosyllabic inquiry: Nevskoï. It ends, after a great deal more of the unknown tongue, by his pointing to the left. And to the left again I go, as bold as brass.

I pursue the line of the quay for perhaps half a mile, then, bearing to the left, I find myself in another place so vast, that I begin to pitch and roll morally like a crazy bark on this huge stone ocean. It is vast, solitary, with a frowning palace-bound coast, and the Nevskoï harbour of refuge nowhere to be seen. But a sail in sight appears in the shape of a soldier. A sulky sail he is, however; and, refusing to listen to my signal gun of distress, holds on his course without laying-to. I am fain, for fear of lying-to myself all the day in this granite Bay of Biscay, to grapple with a frail skiff in the person of a yellow-faced little girl, in printed cotton. Another monosyllabic inquiry, more unknown tongue (very shrill and lisping this time), and ultimately a little yellow digit pointed to the north-east. Then I cross from where stands a colossal equestrian statue, spurring fiercely to the verge of an artificial rock and trampling a trailing serpent beneath his charger's feet, and on whose rocky pedestal there is the inscription "Petro Primo Catharina Secunda." I cross from the statue of Peter the Great some weary hundreds of yards over stone billows, (so wavy is the pavement) to the north-east corner of that which I afterwards know to be the Admiraltecskaia Plochtchad, or great square of the Admiralty; but here, alas! there is a palace whose walls seem to have no cessation for another half mile, north-east. And there are no more sails in sight, save crawling droschkies, and I begin to have a sensation that my compass must be near the magnetic islands, when I unpreparedly turn a sharp angle, and find myself among a throng of people, and in the Nevskoï Prospekt.

It begins badly. It is not a wide street. It does not seem to be a long street. The shops don't look handsome; the pavement is execrable, and though people are plenty, there is no crowd. It is like a London street on a Sunday turned into a Parisian street just after an émeute. It ought to be lively at half-past seven in the evening in the month of May, in the very centre of an imperial city of six hundred thousand inhabitants. But it isn't lively. It is quite the contrary: it is deadly.

This is the place, then, I have been fretting and fuming to see: this is the Boulevard des Italiens of St. Petersburg. This the Nevskoï. As for the perspective, there is no perspective at all that I can see. It is more like Pimlico. There is a street in that royalty-shadowed suburb called Churton Street, in which the Cubitt-Corinthian mansions at its head melt gradually into the squalid hovels of Rochester Row, Westminster, at its tail. The houses on the Nevskoï are big, but I expect them to make a bad end of it. Here is a palace; but not far off, I gloomily prophesy, must be Westminster, and the rat-catcher's daughter. And have I come all the way, not exactly from Westminster, but certainly from t'other side of the water, to see this? By this time I have walked about twenty-five yards.

I have not walked thirty-five yards, before my rashly-formed Nevskoï opinions begin to change. I have not walked fifty yards, before I discover that the Nevskoï is immensely wide and stupendously long, and magnificently paved. I have not walked a hundred yards before I make up my mind that the Nevskoï-Perspective is the handsomest and the most remarkable street in the world.

There are forty Perspectives, Mr. Bull, in this huge-bowelled city. I do not wish you to dislocate your jaw in endeavouring to pronounce the forty Muscovite names of these Perspectives; so, contenting myself with delicately hinting that there is the Vossnesensk Prospekt, likewise those of Oboukhoff, Peterhoff, Ismaïloff, and Semenovskoï, I will leave you to imagine the rest, or familiarise yourself with them gradually, as they perspectively turn up in these my travels. But you are to remember, if you please, that the Nevskoï extends in one straight line from the great square of the Admiralty to the convent of Saint Alecksander-Nevskoï, a distance of two thousand sagenes, or four versts, or one French league, or three English miles! And you will please to think of that Mr. Bull, or Master Brooke, and agree with me that the

Nevskoï is something like a street. This astonishing thoroughfare, now one corridor of palaces and churches, and gorged with the outward and visible riches of nobles, and priests, and merchants, was, a century and a half ago, but a bridle-path through a dense forest leading from a river to a morass. The road was pierced in seventeen hundred and thirteen, and a few miserable wooden huts thrown together on its borders by the man who, under Heaven, seems to have made every mortal thing in Russia — Peter the Great. Now, you find on the Nevskoï the cathedral of Our Lady of Kasan; the Lutheran church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, the great Catholic church of the Assumption, the Dutch church, the imperial palace of Anitchkoff, the splendid Alexksandra theatre, the Place Michel, with its green English square, its palace and its theatre: the Strogonoff Palace, the Roumiantzoff Palace, the Galitzin Palace, the Belozelsky Palace, the Branitzky Palace, the—the—for goodness sake, go fetch a guide-book, and see how many hundred palaces more! On the Nevskoï are the façades of the curious semi-Asiatic bazaar, the Gostinnoï-Dvor, the imperial library (O! British Museum quadrangles, glass roof, duplicate copies, five thousand pounds' worth of decoration, museum flea, and all, you are but a bookstall to it!), the Armenian church, the monuments of Souvorov (our Suwarrow, and spelt in Russ thus: Cybopob), of Barclay de Tolly. On to the Nevskoï débouche the aristocratic Morskaias, which, the Balchoi and the Mala, or Great and Little, are at once the Bond Streets and the Belgravias of Petersburg. On to the Nevskoï opens the Mala Millione, a short but courtly street, terminated by a triumphal archway, monstrous and magnificent, surmounted by a car of Victory, with its eight horses abreast in bronze, and through which you may descry the red granite column of the Czar Alexksandra Pavlovitch (Napoleon's Alexander) and the immense Winter Palace. On to the Nevskoï yawns the long perspective of the Liteinaïa, the dashing street of the Cannouschina, or imperial stables, the palace and garden-lined avenue of the Sadovvaia, or Great Garden Street. And the Nevskoï is intersected by three Venice-like canals; by the canal of the Moïka, at the Polizeïsky-Most or Police Bridge; by the Ekaterininskoï, at the Kasansky-Most or Kasan Bridge; and by the Fontanka (Count Orloff's office—the office where ladies have been, like horses, "taken in to bate"—is on the Fontanka) at the Anitchkoff Bridge. At about five hundred sagenes from this bridge there is another canal, but not quite so handsome a one—the Ligoff. And at one extremity of this Nevskoï of wonders is a convent as big as an English market-town, and with three churches within its walls, while the other end finishes with the tapering golden spire of the Admiralty (there are two Admiralties in this town-residence of the Titans), which Admiralty has a church, a library, an arsenal, a museum, a dockyard, and a cadet's college under its roof, and such an unaccountable host of rooms, that I think every cabin-boy in the fleet must have a separate apartment there when he is on shore, and every boatswain's cat have a private storeroom for each and every one of its nine tails.

At the first blush, seven in the evening would not seem precisely the best chosen time for the minute examination of a street one had never seen before. In England or France, at this early spring-time, it would be sunset, almost twilight, blind man's holiday. And there is not a gas-lamp on the Nevskoï to illumine me in my researches. The posts are there: massive, profusely-ornamented pillars of wrought-iron or bronze; but not a lamp for love or money. But you will understand the place when I tell you that it will be broad staring daylight on the Nevskoï till half-past eleven of the clock to-night; that after that time there will be a soft, still, dreamy, mysterious semi-twilight, such as sometimes veils the eyes of a woman you love, when you are sitting silent by her side, silent and happy, thinking of her, while she, with those inscrutable twilight orbs, is thinking of—God knows what (perhaps of the somebody else by whose side she used to sit, and whom you would so dearly love to strangle, if it were all the same to her); and then, at half-past one in the morning, comes the brazen staring morning light again. For from this May middle to the end of July, there will be no more night in St. Petersburg.

No night! why can't you cover up the sky then? why not roof in the Nevskoï—the whole bad city—with black crape? Why not force masks on all your slaves, or blind them? For, as true as heaven, there are things done here that God's sun should never shine upon. Cover up that palace. Cover up that house on the Fontanka. Cover up, for shame's sake, that police-yard, that Christians may not hear the women scream. Cover them up thick and threefold; for, of a surety, if the light comes in, the truth will out, and Palace and Fontanka house and Gaol-yard walls will come tumbling about your ears, insensate and accursed, and crush you.

At the Admiralty corner of the Nevskoï I make my first cordial salutation to the fine arts in Russia. This long range of plate-glass windows appertains to an ingenious Italian, Signor Daziaro, whose handsome print-shop, with the elaborate Russian inscription on the frontage, has no doubt often pleased and puzzled you on the Boulevard des Capucines in Paris; and who has succursal fine-arts' establishments in Moscow, in Warsaw, and I believe also in Odessa, as well as this one in St. Petersburg. Daziaro is the Russian Ackermann's. For the newest portrait of the Czar, for the latest lithographs

of the imperial family, for the last engraving after Sir Edwin Landseer, the last paysage by Ferogio, the last caricature (not political, be it well understood, but of a Lorette or débardeur tendency) of Gavarni or Gustave de Beaumont, you must go to Daziaro's. His windows, too, display the same curious thermometer of celebrity as those of our print-sellers. A great man is disgraced, and sinks into oblivion. One day he dies, and then people suddenly remember him (for about two days), as he was, before he wasn't. Presto! his portrait appears in Daziaro's window. Half-a-dozen copies of his portrait are sold during his two days' resuscitation; and then he is relegated to the portfolio again, and slumbers till his son wins a battle, or runs away with somebody else's wife, or is made a minister, or is sent to Siberia, or does something for people to remember and talk about (for about two days more), what Monsieur his father was. When, failing the son's portrait, the astute Daziaro gives the respected progenitor another airing in the print-shop window; and so on till we ripe and rot, all of us. And thereby hangs a tale. Is this only Russian? Is it not so the whole world over? There was a thermometer of this sort in a print-shop at the corner of Great and Little Queen Streets, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, London, which I used to pass every morning; and the fresh portraits in the window were as good as the news of the day to me. The thermometer in Daziaro's is more apparent, more significant, and more frequently consulted; for this is a country where the news of the day is scarce; where, in an intolerable quantity of waste paper, there is about a copeck's-worth of news; and where the real stirring daily intelligence is muttered in dark entries, and whispered behind hands in boudoirs, and glozed from lip to ear over tumblers of tea, and scribbled on blank leaves of pocket-books passed hastily from hand to hand, and then the blank leaves, converted instantly into pipe-lights. As a general rule you can find out much easier what is most talked about by consulting Signor Daziaro's window, in preference to the Journal de St. Pétérsbourg.

Art, Daziaro passim, is in no want of patrons. The shop is thronged till ten o'clock in the evening (when all the shops on the Nevskoï are closed). The stock of prints seems to comprise the very rarest and most expensive; and you may be sure that a liberal per-centage has been added to the original price (however heavy) to meet the peculiar views of the Russian public. The Russian public—that which rides in carriages, and can buy beautiful prints, and has a soul to be saved—the only Russian public that exists of course, or is recognised on the Nevskoï; this genteel public does not like, and will not buy cheap things. Cheap things are low, common, vulgar, not fit for nous autres. Ivan Ivanovitch, the Moujik, buys cheap things. And so articles must not only be dear, but exorbitantly dear, or Andrei Andreivitch the merchant, who is rich but thrifty, would compete with nous autres, which would never do. Andre will give a hundred roubles for his winter fur. This would be shocking to the genteel public; so crafty Frenchmen and Germans open shops on the Nevskoï, where a thousand silver roubles are charged and given for a fur pelisse, not much superior to the merchant's.

There are dozens of these "Pelz-Magasins," or furrier's shops, on the splendid Nevskoï, and even more splendid are their contents. In a country which even in the hottest summer may be described as the Polar Regions with the chill off—(imagine, if you like, a red hot poker substituted for the icy pole itself)—and which for five, and sometimes six months in the year is a frigid hell, it may be easily conceived that furs, with us only the ornaments of the luxurious, are necessities of life. Ivan the Moujik does not wear a schooba or fur pelisse, but pauvre diable as he is, scrapes together eight or ten silver roubles wherewith to buy a touloupe, or coat of dressed sheepskin, whose woolly lining keeps him tolerably warm. But from the humblest employé to Prince Dolgorouki, every one above the condition of a serf must have a schooba of some sort or other for winter. Some wear catskins, like my friend the Jew, who wanted me to buy the kibitka, at Stettin. The Gostinnoï Dvor merchants wear pelisses of white wolfskin underneath their long cloth caftans. The fur of the squirrel, the Canada marmot, and the silver fox of Siberia, are in great request for the robes of burgesses' wives and employés' ladies. The common soldiers wear sheepskins under their grey capotes, the officers have cloaks lined with the fur of the bear or wolf. But nous autres: the Dvoryanin or Russian noble—the Seigneur, with his hundreds of serfs and hundreds of thousands of roubles—for him and for Madame la Princesse, his spouse, are reserved the sable pelisse, the schooba of almost priceless furs, thick, warm, and silky; a garment that is almost an inheritance, and which you spend almost an inheritance to acquire. One hundred and fifty pounds sterling—I have observed this—is the price of a first-class schooba on the Nevskoï. There are, to be sure, certain murky warehouses in the Gostinnoï Dvor, where a Russian with a taste for bargaining and beating down (and that taste is innate to the Muscovite) may purchase a sable pelisse for a third of the money mentioned. In Germany, particularly at Leipsic, furs or schoppen are still cheaper; and one pelisse to each traveller passes through the custom-house duty free; yet the Russian aristocracy neglect this cheap mart, and hold by the Nevskoï Pelz-Magasins. We all remember what Hudibras says of the equality of pleasure between cheating and being cheated.

Next in importance to the furriers are the jewellers. Now I comprehend why the profession of a diamond-merchant is so important in Leipsic and Amsterdam, and where the chief market for diamonds is to be found. Every jeweller's window has an Alnaschar's basket of almost priceless gems displayed in it. Rings, bracelets, necklaces, carcans, vivières, earrings, stomachers, bouquets, fan-mounts, brooches, solitaires,—all blazing with diamonds so large that the stock of Howell and James, or Hunt and Roskell, would look but as pedlars' packs of penny trinkets beside them. No money in Russia! Put that figment out of your head as soon as ever you can: there is enough wealth in these Nevskoï shop-windows to carry on a big war for half-a-dozen years longer. They are not outwardly splendid though, these jewellers. No plate-glass; no Corinthian columns; no gas-jets with brilliant reflectors. There is an oriental dinginess and mystery about the exterior of the shops. The houses themselves in which the shops are situated have a private look, like the banker's, or the doctor's, or the lawyer's, in an English country town magnified a thousand-fold; and the radiant stock is displayed in something like a gigantic parlour window, up a steep flight of steps. There is a miserable moujik, in a crassy sheepskin, staring in at the diamonds, munching a cucumber meanwhile. This man-chattel is a slave, condemned to hopeless bondage, robbed, despised, kicked, beaten like a dog; and he gazes at Prince Legreeskoff's jewels with a calmly critical air. What right?—but, be quiet; if I come to right, what right have I to come to Muscovy grievance-hunting, when I have left a thousand grievances at home, crying to Heaven for redress!

The tailors, whose name is that of ten legions, and who are very nearly all French and Germans, have no shops. They have magnificent suites of apartments on Nevskoï first-floors; and their charge for making a frock-coat is about eight guineas sterling, English. You understand now what sort of tailors they are. They are too proud, too high and mighty, to content themselves with the simple sartorial appellation, and have improved even upon our home-snobbery in that line: calling themselves not only Merchant Tailors, but Kleider meisters (Clothes masters); Undertakers for Military Habiliments (Entrepreneurs d'habillemens militaires); Confectioners of Seignorial Costume, and the like high-sounding titles. You are to remember that St. Petersburg is permanently garrisoned by the Imperial Guard, which is something like one hundred and fifteen thousand strong; that the epauletted mob of officers (whose pay is scarcely sufficient to defray the expenses of their boot-varnish) are, with very few exceptions, men of large fortune, and that the government does not find them in so much as a button towards their equipment. And as the uniforms are gorgeous in the extreme, and very easily spoilt, the Undertaker of Military Habiliments makes rather a good thing of it than otherwise in the capital of the Tsar.

Bootmakers abound—Germans, almost to a man—whose shops are grim fortalices of places, with stern jack-boots frowning at you through the windows. And shops and palaces, palaces and shops, succeed each other for mile after mile, till I am fairly worn out with magnificence, and, going home to bed, determine to take the Nevskoï-mixture as before, to-morrow.

SALOME AND I.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

I WALKED direct into the parlour, and was somewhat surprised to find it occupied by a stranger. He was seated in my easy-chair, with his feet comfortably cased in my slippers, my pet meerschaum in his mouth, and a glass of brandy and water at his elbow. He rose hurriedly as I entered the room, and seemed to clutch at something inside his vest. I bowed, thinking for the moment that he was some stranger who had called on matters of business. He was a tall, well-built, resolute-looking man, with a thick black moustache, and a head of curling black hair. He had on a voluminous overall, so that but little of his under-dress could be seen.

"Mr. Ralph Wrangford, I presume?" he said, inquiringly.

"The same, sir," I replied. "May I ask whom I have the pleasure of addressing?"

"Your father, Ralph—your father!" he replied softly. "O! my son, come to my heart!" he added, seeing my stare of astonishment, "and let me clasp you in my embrace."

He approached me with outspread arms. I saw, I understood nothing but that my father was before me, and sprang to his bosom with a cry of joy that ended in a burst of rapturous swift-flowing tears.

"O, Ralph! Ralph!" whispered a tremulous voice in my ear, "through how many long years of toil and trouble have I looked forward to this happy meeting, scarcely daring to hope that my eyes would ever behold you? This moment repays me for everything. Bless you! bless you, my son! your father is happy once more."

I looked up into his face with a joyful smile, but started back in surprise when I saw the sneering devil that sat on his lips, and mocked me out of his eyes. Could it be the same man whose voice had seemed tremulous with emotion but a moment before! A low derisive laugh at my discomfiture dispelled all doubt on the point.

"Come," said he, "now that we have done the paternal, let's to business. And, first, away with this cursed disguise!"

So speaking, he deliberately divested

himself, first of his moustache, then of his black wig, and then of his overall. Producing a blue and white silk tie, he fastened it in an artistic manner round his neck, and stood forth a fair-looking specimen of an English country gentleman of sporting tendencies.

"You see how completely I trust you," he said; "how thoroughly I put myself in your power, if you choose to betray me. But that you will never do. Little as I have seen of you, I can read you too well to have any doubt on that score. You would be the last man in the world to betray your father."

"You judge me rightly," I replied with fervour. "But tell me how it is that you are here at all. I—I thought that—"

"You thought that I was transported for life, and that you would never be troubled with my company, eh? I escaped, Ralph, I escaped; but the devil of it is that I have got one of those cursed detectives at my heels. I spent six months in France before coming to England, where I contrived to live like a gentleman without much trouble to myself. And there I might yet have been, had not some confounded fatality, which I could not resist, led my steps to England, where one of the first men I met on the quay after landing was the very fellow that arrested me twenty years ago. Whether or not he really knew who I was, of course I can't say; but he evidently suspected me, or he would not have dogged me as he did. However, I was one too many for him that time; but I've reason to believe that he's on my traces again; so I must e'en hide my head for a week or two till the wind blows fair; and with whom should I be so welcome as with my own dear boy?"

"But you were innocent, father, were you not?" I asked, anxiously. "You did not commit the crime laid to your charge?"

"O engaging simplicity!" he answered, with a low, sneering laugh. "Of course I was innocent! At least I, for one, never doubted the fact, and therefore you have no reason to do so. But I am hungry," he continued, "deuced hungry! I sent that old housekeeper of yours out, above half an hour ago, for some beefsteaks and brandy; but neither of them have yet made their appearance, and my glass is now empty. Ring for the hag, Ralph,—ring for her. But, stay! Before she comes, let me give you a little instruction. Can you trust her with a secret?"

"Yes, thoroughly,—unhesitatingly."

"So be it, then; but, remember, sir, that you—you will answer dearly for it, if she betray me. Give her to understand, then, that I am a near relative of yours, who, being in danger of arrest for debt, is obliged to hide himself for a short time; and lay strict injunctions on her not to mention my presence here to a soul. You understand. You can put the case as you like."

When old Betty came in, she stared at my father in amazement. She had left in the room a dark, moustachioed, Spanish-looking person; and now found in his place a jolly English gentleman. She had no surprise left to greet my sudden return. I told her in a few words all that I deemed necessary. My father added emphasis to the story.

"Look you, old lady," he said, drawing a revolver from the inner folds of his vest. "You see this? You have heard what your master has said? Well, let me tell you, once for all, that if you breathe to living soul one syllable about me, as sure as there is a sky above you, I'll send one of these bullets into your brain! Mind! I have long ears; and if you whisper my secret at midnight, locked up in your own room, I shall still hear it. Now begone! and send in those beefsteaks and that brandy, instanter."

The old woman—whose terror prevented her from uttering a word in reply—curtsied tremblingly to the terrible stranger, and fluttered out of the room. Supper was soon afterwards produced, and my father invited me to join him in the repast; but I felt no inclination to do so.

As he sat there, eating and drinking with much heartiness, like a man that had been half-famished for some time, I could not take my eyes off him; and so sat staring steadily till he had finished.

Having lighted my meerschaum, and filled himself a tumbler of neat brandy, he elevated his feet on the chimney-piece; and, leaning back in my easy chair, proceeded to take a cool survey of me from head to foot. I quailed beneath the steady gaze of those clear cold eyes, in which I could detect no trace of kindly feeling towards myself.

"You are disappointed with your father, ain't you?" he asked. "You expected to find him a sort of ideal personage,—a second Eugene Aram, full of sham philosophy and false sentiment; and, because he is not a snivelling moralist, you are almost ready to wish him away again. You are not out of your spooneyhood yet, my boy. You will learn after awhile that it is your men of action—your men of bone and sinew, not your dreamy theorists and mouldy bookworms—that influence the world, and bend circumstances to their will. Had you been in my place, you would have been a convict still, and a convict you would have died. My motto has been, Trust no one but yourself; and I advise you to adopt it."

"You forget sometimes to act up to it," I said, "or else, why trust me with your secret?"

"I did not trust even you unreservedly," he replied. "Not so. What would you gain by betraying me? Nothing. What would you lose by it? Much. Proof: Firstly, all men would call you a wretch for betraying your own father, and you would be looked upon with universal abhorrence. Secondly, all your respectable friends, your good

friends, your moral friends, would shrink from any connection with a felon's son, and would shun you as if you were plague-stricken. Thirdly, you are of such a touchy disposition yourself, that you would go moaning about the world for the rest of your days lamenting the deed you had done. Bah! I never let my adversary see my trump cards till the game obliges me to play them. Fill this glass again." He lapsed into contemptuous silence, as if I were unworthy of further notice.

The hours sped on, till midnight was long past; and still he stirred not, spoke not. He smoked and drank furiously; like a man who had long been debarred from similar enjoyments; but without any apparent effect on himself. The candles went out, the fire burnt low. Still he sat on one side, glaring steadily at the glimmering ashes, and never moving, except to lift his glass or refill his pipe; while I on the other side, powerless to take my eyes off that dark figure, loomed grimly through the dusk of the room, with my mind reduced by fatigue, excitement, and the want of food, to a condition that left nothing but a feeling of vague wonder, not unmixed with dread. I had little faith in the reality of the scene: doubtless it was a dream,—a strange fantastic dream, certainly—but still without any foundation in fact.

The first streak of daylight was streaming through the curtains, and the fire had burnt down to a dull red spark, when he gruffly demanded to be shown his room. I conducted him up-stairs to the little attic where I had formerly slept, as I thought he would be less likely to be observed there than in any other room. Besides, in case of need, he might escape through the skylight on to the roof, and thence to the ground. My heart moved toward him as I turned to leave the room. I remembered the loving letters written to him by my mother long years ago. I thought of all he had suffered; and, turning round with tearful eyes, I stretched out my hands, and felt my whole being yearn irresistibly toward him.

"O, father, father, say you love me, if it be ever so little!"

"What? snivelling again! Deuce take me if ever I came across such a spoon! Come! let your name be Walker. I'm in no humour for the pathetic to night, and couldn't squeeze a tear if you offered me five pounds. I'm ashamed of you; dash me if I'm not!"

How shall I describe the terrible time that passed after that night? Even now I shudder when I think of it. It was misery to be under the same roof with that man. Heaven knows how earnestly I still strove to regard him with that feeling of love and honour which I considered his due; and to keep him still throned on that pedestal in my heart, where he had stood glorified for so many years; but it was impossible to do so. As days and weeks passed on, the depths of his nature were revealed to me one by one, and all were dark and forbidding. Not one generous sentiment, not one loveable trait, not one lofty impulse did he ever betray. Sometimes he would be moody and irritable, and scarcely speak a word for days together; while, at other times, his demeanour was characterised by a wild and reckless gaiety that brooked neither time nor place—a fierce effervescence that bubbled a moment and was gone. But in whatever mood he might be, he always drank deeply, yet without any apparent effect on his mind. He was afraid to venture out during the day, and lay in bed till evening with the brandy-bottle by his side; but every night at ten o'clock, whether the weather was fair or foul he set out, and invariably obliged me to accompany him. We took long, lone rambles among the hills and moors, for three or four hours, never returning till we were both thoroughly fatigued. It was during these nocturnal rambles that he made me his confidant, and related to me many of the secrets of his early life.

"I must open my mind to somebody, or I shall go mad," he said to me one evening.

Many hair-breadth escapes and wild adventures he narrated to me at such times, in several of which, according to his own account, the part he had played was a very questionable one. He was a sceptic in everything that a good man would anchor himself to. Morality, virtue, right and wrong, were to him empty sounds. Self was the god at whose shrine he worshipped; to whom everything was sacrificed.

This baleful presence was infinitely worse than the old shadow that darkened my childhood, and its effects soon began to tell upon me. My bodily health became impaired. Those long rambles by night, coming after my day's labour in the school, were too much for my strength; but, weak as I was, my father always insisted on my accompanying him. The effect of his conversation on my mind was even worse. The distinction between right and wrong began to appear less vivid to me; unknown to myself at the time, my standard of morality became lowered; and, in fact, my mind was being slowly poisoned. The dread presence of that man weighed like an incubus upon me; I had little time left to think of Salome even, and I felt glad now, that she had refused me. I would have died sooner than have imposed on her a fraction of the burden I now bore.

At this period the war in the east was breaking out, and already throughout the length and breadth of the land subscriptions in aid of the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in battle were being raised. We in Howthwaite were never behindhand in any charitable scheme. A committee of gentlemen was formed to collect subscriptions

in the town and neighbourhood; and I was appointed secretary to the fund.

I was called upon one evening by several members of the committee, who, having been to the treasurer's house, and finding he had been suddenly called from home owing to the illness of his brother, desired me to take charge of their day's collection in aid of the funds, amounting to three hundred pounds. It was a duty that I would gladly have dispensed with, especially as banking hours were over. They pressed me, however, so much on the point, that I took the money, and gave them my receipt. In my parlour was a small iron safe, let into the wall, in which were kept many of the deeds relating to the foundation of the hospital. In it I carefully deposited the money.

That night, after my usual walk was over, and my father had retired to his room, I looked into the safe, and, having seen that everything was secure, went to bed, placing the key of the safe under my pillow before blowing out the light. I awoke out of an uneasy dream just in time to hear the clock strike three. I felt instinctively under my pillow for the key, but it was gone. I was out of bed in an instant. The first pale streaks of day were beginning to broaden in the east, but all the landscape without lay dim and indistinct. I partially dressed myself in haste, and stole gently down stairs, with no thought but that of seeing that my money was safe. The parlour door was closed but not fastened. A dim light shone from under it, and through the keyhole. I approached on tiptoe, and pushed it suddenly open. My father was stooping, in the act of opening the safe with the key stolen from under my pillow. He started up in surprise as the door flew suddenly open, and glared savagely at me. I rushed forward, and pushing him hastily on one side, planted myself with my back to the safe.

"Father! what are you about?" I exclaimed. "The money is not mine."

"Yours or not, I must have it," he replied, in a low, hoarse voice. "So stand aside, or it will be worse for you."

I saw by the wild gleam in his eyes that he had been drinking even more than usual.

"The money is not mine. It is only left with me for the night. You cannot have it."

"Have it, I must and will. Stand aside."

"Take all else that I have, only—"

"Will you stand aside?"

"O, father! have some pity," I exclaimed. "You will ruin me for ever if you take this money. I cannot replace it. Everything else is yours, but this. This you must not touch."

"Out of my way I tell you."

"Never! I will defend it against everyone while I have breath. It is a sacred trust. You should be the last man in the world to wish me to betray it."

"A very pretty speech indeed," he replied, with a sneer. "You have more pluck than I gave you credit for. I begin to like you a little. Nevertheless, I must have the money. For the last time, will you stand aside? You refuse? Well, let us see what a little friend of mine has got to say on the subject."

So speaking, he quietly drew a revolver from the inside of his vest. The ominous click of the weapon, as he raised it to the level of my head, was the last sound I expected to hear on earth—the last sound, except the audible beat of my heart, and the dull, thunderous buzzing of my brain. Momently I expected to see him pull the trigger; but in about half-a-minute he lowered the pistol, remarking, as if to himself, as he did so: "It might alarm the neighbourhood if I fired, and that would be inconvenient." Then addressing me again, he said:

"I give you one more chance for your life. Will you give up the money quietly? No? Well then, take that for being obstinate!" Clutching the barrel of the pistol in his hand as he spoke, he brought down the stock heavily on my head, and I fell to the ground insensible.

It was broad daylight when I recovered my consciousness. I rose with difficulty. A thousand hammers seemed to be beating on my brain. My face was smeared with blood that flowed from a great wound on my forehead. The door of the safe was locked, and the key lay on the table, near an empty brandy-bottle. I knew it would be useless to look if the money were still there; so taking the key with me, I went up-stairs to bed, and fell immediately into a dull, torpid sleep, that lasted till mid-day.

I was informed, when I awoke, that several gentlemen had been inquiring for me. I knew what they wanted; so I washed, and dressed, and went down stairs to await their coming again. I had not long to wait. The treasurer had returned, and they were come for the money left with me overnight.

I shall never forget the universal stare of astonishment that greeted me when I told them I had lost it. They pressed me for further particulars, but I had none to give; except to add that I was innocent of appropriating it to myself. The same reason that had prevented me from calling for assistance during the night, sealed my tongue now. Let what come, I was determined not to betray my father.

Some of my best friends were on the committee; and my solemn asseveration that I had lost the money, and not used it for my own purposes, would have been sufficient, in their eyes, to exculpate me from that of any graver charge than that of carelessness. But Mr. Basinglee was not to be conciliated. How could I have lost it? he asked. If I had really lost it, why not say how, when, and where? He was decidedly of opinion that the committee ought to prosecute. He, for one, should not be satisfied unless they did. Mr. Basinglee's view of the case was that

of a business man, uninfluenced by any considerations of friendship or affection. It was perhaps the correct view.

So, at four o'clock that afternoon I was arrested on a charge of fraud and embezzlement, and I beheld the sunset through the grated window of a cell.

Now that my fortunes were reduced to such a point, I felt to care but little for what might be yet in store for me. I had philosophy enough in my composition to take everything quietly, and my first night in gaol was not altogether a cheerless one. It was such happiness to be relieved of the presence of that terrible man; and now I had leisure to think of Salome, and, to a day-dreamer like me, that was no mean enjoyment. I could not have borne her to think that I was guilty of what was laid to my charge, and I determined to write to her once more when I knew my sentence, and bid her farewell for ever.

The following morning I was examined before the magistrates, and remanded for a week, owing to certain information received by the police.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

I HAD passed five uneventful days in prison. On the morning of the sixth day a turnkey came to inform me that some one had called to see me, and that the governor had courteously granted me the use of his parlour for the interview, if I chose to accept it. A lady, attired in deep mourning, was standing with her back to the door, gazing out of the window, as I entered. She turned on hearing the noise of my footsteps. It was Salome. Her face was very pale, and her eyes looked large and sunken.

We shook hands without a word, and sat down near each other.

"I should have come to see you before, Ralph," she said, the tears starting to her eyes at the first word; "but I did not know that you were here till yesterday, when I accidentally read the particulars in a newspaper. But I know that you are innocent—that you have never wronged any man as they say you have."

"Thank you—thank you, dear Salome! Those are the first comforting words I have heard for a long time. I care not what the world may think, if you but believe me to be innocent."

"I know that you are innocent. I never doubted you for a moment. They can never convict you. When they hear your explanation they must believe in your innocence, and set you free at once."

"I shall have no explanation to give," I replied gloomily. "There are circumstances connected with the case that I can never reveal to anyone. I shall go forth to the world branded as a felon. But oh, Salome! however much circumstances may seem against me, however black my case may look—and that it will look black be certain—do not you, you above all others, lose faith in me, or believe that I am guilty."

"Fear me not," she soothingly replied. "Though all the world should be against you, I will stand your friend. But, tell me, are there no means left for delivering you from this strait? If I understand the affair aright, you have failed to make good a certain amount entrusted to you. But suppose your friends were to come forward, and pay this sum, would not your prosecutors be glad to accept the amount, in lieu of obtaining a profitless verdict against you?"

"Perhaps they might," I replied.

"Tell me the amount."

"Three hundred pounds; and I am not worth as many farthings."

"Dear friend, listen to me;" she said, earnestly, laying her hand on mine. "I am not without money. I have five hundred pounds in the bank: a legacy left me a few years ago by a distant relative. Take whatever of it is necessary—all of it if you will—repay these men, and be again free."

I felt the calmness I had hitherto maintained deserting me; and it was some moments before I could trust myself to reply.

"Salome! from my heart I thank you. But I cannot accept your proffered aid."

"And why not?" she hastily asked.

"Because it would only be transferring the debt. I should owe you the money then, and that without a prospect of repaying you; for, were I free this minute, I should go forth a ruined man, and have to seek a new home where, like Ulysses, the days would——

> '——darken round me, and the years
> Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'"

"Ralph, Ralph, you have ever been to me a very dear friend; and what is friendship worth that is never put to the test? Take this money. It is yours. It shall be yours!"

"It must not be, indeed, Salome! And, now, while you are yet with me, for we may perhaps never meet again; let me ask your pardon for writing to you that foolish letter. Forget that it was written—forget that I am in prison; and during the short time we can yet spend together, let us talk of old times, and fancy ourselves children again, going to gather lilies round Langley Farm."

"A letter, Ralph!—what letter?"

"That letter I wrote you one evening last midsummer, to which you returned such a cruel reply."

"I never received a letter from you in my life, nor ever addressed a line to you, except the few brief sentences I wrote you one autumn, to inform you that we should not return from Scotland by way of Howthwaite. There is some mystery about it. Relate the circumstance to me."

I told her in a few words the substance of

what I have related here respecting it; and repeated to her, word for word (for I well remember it), the answer I had received.

"Dear Ralph," she replied, "that answer must have been written by my aunt. She probably intercepted your letter, and replied to it herself. Let us say no more about it, if you please. She is dead now; but she was a kind friend to me."

She sat in silence after this, her head drooping slightly forward, and a dreamy look in her eyes, as though she were trying to realise to herself the strange knowledge she had just acquired.

"And did you really and truly feel all that you expressed towards me in that letter?"

"Did! I feel it now. How truly and fondly I have loved you through many long years, I cannot now tell. But let it pass. My position in life is now changed, and—"

"Let that pass too," she said, interrupting me. "There is still this foolish money question to settle. After what you have told me, you cannot reasonably refuse to let me assist you as I propose.

"Less now than ever, Salome. Let not my love be sullied by the touch of money. Let me not in my musings hereafter think of you as my creditor for so many pounds, but as something to which my thoughts can turn in trouble, and on which my recollection can rest when all is dark around me."

"Oh, Ralph, it would not be so! You are too fanciful. You would not be my debtor. I give it to you freely, willingly—a gift from my heart."

"It cannot be. On this point I am firm."

"Look, Ralph, I will even go down on my knees to ask you; to implore you! Freedom may be yours, and a fair name before all men."

"Salome—rise!"

"Ralph, Ralph, do not look at me so sternly! There is no light of love in those cold eyes. If you will not indeed take this money as a gift from me—you said you loved me fondly, you know—then—take me with it, and it will be yours altogether!" Her head dropped on my knees, and a torrent of tears burst over them. One long kiss, and I raised her up; placing her on the seat beside me. I would not give way to all that I felt, nor make too sure of my happiness till I had told her all.

"Dearer to me than before," she said, when I had concluded; "now that you have no one in the world to love or care for you except myself!" The next morning I regained my freedom.

About a fortnight after my release, a daring burglary was committed near a small town in one of the midland counties. The property stolen was valuable, and the police were unusually active in tracking the thief; for it was thought to be the work of one man. He was apprehended; and, the county assizes being close at hand, his trial came on the following week. It resulted in his condemnation to penal servitude for life. Previous to his trial it was discovered that he was an escaped convict, who had been sentenced to transportation for life for coining, fifteen years before. From this man I one day received a letter, requesting me in urgent terms to go and see him. His note was so worded that I lost no time in complying with his request.

He made a confession to me which was so strange that, had I not respectable witnesses to vouch for the truth of it, I should hesitate to bring it forward here as a fact:—

He had known my father intimately for years while undergoing his first sentence, for coining. My father had frequently related to him the incidents of his early life; dwelling on them with a minuteness that made his listener completely master of every detail. They had frequently discussed various plans for escaping together; and, when my father lay mortally sick, two years before, his last request was to beg of Groom (the coiner's name) if he ever found himself again in England, to seek out the dying man's wife and child, and convey to them the assurance that his last prayers were for them. Some time afterwards, Groom succeeded in escaping; and on finding himself in England the thought struck him that he might turn the knowledge he had acquired to his own benefit. The result has been seen in his visit to me and the deception consequent thereon. Groom narrated the whole with much glee, vowing, as he concluded, that it was one of the best moves he had every practised on anyone. For further security, I had his confession taken down in writing, and induced him to sign it.

After my release from prison, I engaged temporary lodgings in a farm-house, a mile or two from Howthwaite, and there awaited the settlement of my affairs consequent on my dismissal from Chalmy's Hospital. After our marriage, it was the intention of Salome and myself to go to America, and there to begin the world anew. The confession of Groom, however, upset our plans, and no longer rendered it necessary for me to leave Howthwaite. No reason now existed for keeping secret the means by which I had lost my money. I was in a position to prove the deception that had been practised upon me. My old friends stuck to me, and I was once more unanimously elected master. My marriage took place the same day that I was re-installed. My dear scholars—the old widows—every one—seemed rejoiced to see me back. She whom I loved, and ever shall love, better than life itself, was there to witness my welcome.

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LOST IN THE PIT.

THAT, in South Wales, on the fifteenth of last July, one hundred and fourteen working men and boys were stifled in a half-ventilated coal-mine, their lives being sacrificed through the neglect of almost every sort of due regard to the prevention of such accident, most of our readers know. In an English coal-mine, on the thirteenth of the month following, they may have read also in the newspapers how, as the result of gross neglect and recklessness, ten men were horribly slain by an explosion of foul air. They may have read also how, after the lapse of another six weeks, on the first of October, fifteen men, in another mine, by the outbreak of a flood of water that had been accumulating in old workings, were either drowned or forced to fly into unventilated levels, and there die of suffocation. Of the first of the calamities here specified, the details of a very full investigation are before us; the investigation of the second is before us also; while the third case, as we write, awaits inquiry. We propose to tell the story of the first calamity, deducing it in every point from the published evidence, but avoiding—however notorious the case may be—any direct naming of places or of persons. We desire that culpable neglect should receive ample punishment. On many occasions we have dwelt upon the necessity of bringing home criminal responsibility for loss of life to those who are accountable for accidents which it was in their power, by a right discharge of duty, to prevent. Our argument, however, is not against persons, but against customs,—against habits of thought common throughout the country, and, as we must needs say, plainly inconsistent either with right knowledge or right principle.

Right principle would certainly make it appear the duty of a gentleman who lives at ease upon the produce of a coal-mine to know what is the nature of the property over which he has an absolute control. We do not say that he should manage it himself, but hold that he should know more of what is being done on his behalf than the mere sum of the income annually raised for him. If he will understand that the men who work upon the coal in galleries underground, often at a great distance from the pit-mouth, require for the maintenance of health a certain free supply of air which must be artificially provided, with a due protection against danger from accumulation of foul gases; if he will have, as he must have, a sense of the vast importance of free ventilation, and that knowledge of the conditions under which alone it is to be secured, which it would cost a moderately educated person scarcely a day to acquire,—the coal-owner can easily learn for himself whether the ventilation in his mine is of a kind to satisfy his conscience. It is the main point of life or death, of health or disease, to the persons by whose industry he lives. He can—at the cost, probably, of less trouble than is incurred in the course of any week's amusement—be assured through his own scrutiny that from year to year upon this point no negligence arises among those who represent him; and it is his duty to obtain for himself that assurance.

But in this respect how did the case stand with the mine which caused, through the neglect of those who were in charge of it, the destruction, in one hour, of more than a hundred lives? According to the evidence of the government inspector for the district in which this accident occurred, the workings in the fatal pit were last visited by him eight and twenty months before the visits he made subsequent to the catastrophe. They had, during the interval, been increased one-third in area, the number of men employed upon them had been doubled, and no additional precautions had been taken to secure a proper ventilation. Yet the mine twenty-eight months before the accident, when it was yet small, had been declared unsafe by the inspector, who, however, seems to have communicated his suggestions not directly—or, at any rate, not with sufficient urgency to the persons able to ensure their adoption.

In order that air enough may travel through a mine to cleanse it from foul gases, and supply properly the breath of life to the men underground, it is essential that a free current should be established. The air entering at one point in abundant quantity should sweep through the whole mine, and, carrying away with it in dilution the foul gas it finds, be sped out through a spacious

opening in a strong upward current, which can only be established by means of a well-managed furnace at the bottom of the upcast shaft. Where the air passing in at a single entrance has to find its way through a long range of galleries, lessened in quantity by leakage as it goes upon its way, and at the same time becoming adulterated more and more with noxious gases, it is absolutely necessary that the single shaft, which is the air-hole to perhaps miles of subterranean gallery, should be of ample size.

Twenty-eight months ago the air-way for the colliery of which we speak was insufficient, and it was recommended to the overmen by the inspector, that the ventilation of the mine should be in sections, with a distinct current to each heading or panel. If an explosion were to occur in a mine so arranged, it would be almost certainly confined to the heading in which it began. That was one recommendation made; but it was not acted upon. When the accident occurred, twenty-eight months afterwards, one thin current of air for the whole ventilation of the south workings of the mine was coursed through five or six miles of gallery, diverted in its course by many barriers of gob, or rubbish, and no less than six dozen wooden doors, some of these in the most important positions, being single, so that through them pure air could leak out, and foul air could leak in.

Men worked in galleries, so ventilated, upon coal from which at certain points the gas could be heard rushing in a stream, with a sound called in the language of the miners, music. They cut cells in the coal, to which air came in so dull a current that it scarcely bent the flame of a candle; and they worked with naked candles, over the wick of which there played habitually a corpse-light of foul gas, varying from half an inch to two inches in height. They were not warned by it; they called the light a cap, and as it was never absent, they grew used to it, and were content.

The workings were pushed on; the want of air became every week greater; the supply was still the same. It only required, said one of the inspectors, at the inquest on the one hundred and fourteen men who were destroyed; "it only required an unfavourable day for ventilation, or a little increased leakage, or even the opening of the many doors by the men going to their work, to turn the balance, and bring the air to the explosive point."

Another suggestion that had been made twenty-eight months before the accident, by the government inspector, and which had occurred naturally to other men, was, that the ventilation of the pit should be improved by the establishment of a communication with the air-shaft of an adjacent set of workings, which was part of the same property. Practical colliers agreed that this should have been done, and it was said that it would only take two or three weeks to do it. It was not done; something appears to have been thought about, but there was nothing done. And it is to be remembered that in a half-ventilated mine there is not only a risk of the manifest calamity of an explosion, but there is the certainty of daily secret hurt done to the health of all the men employed.

Now, let us observe the relation in which the owner of this pit stands towards his property: again saying, that as to him and as to all other persons concerned in the matter of which we speak, we do not believe that there attaches any blame which does not attach equally to hundreds of men in the same position. He has taken no part, he testifies of himself, in the management of the mine, but in compliance with the requisitions of the Act of Parliament, he, as owner, directed the manager to give a copy of the rules to every collier in his employment. The persons responsible for the working of the mine were the officers; he himself entrusted everything to the general manager, and held no communication with the other officers. He knew the names of two successive colliery agents, of the over man, and the three fire-men; those were all the names he knew. He knew that great responsibility rested upon the firemen, but could not detail their duties. Two years ago, he dismissed two firemen by the desire of his general manager, and appointed two others in whom the men had no confidence, and against whom they struck. The government inspector having reverted to the time of the explosion, which, four years ago, destroyed sixty-five lives, at the Middle Dufferin Colliery, and inquired concerning a letter from him, dated the eighth of July, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, pointing out the great loss of life that might occur in the mine now under question, from the want of proper ventilation, the owner does not recollect having received such a letter; does not recollect that there was sent to him a printed report of the causes of the Middle Dufferin explosion; does not recollect a letter sent to him by the government inspector in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-four, pointing out the risk of an explosion on his own works, and suggesting the adoption of certain rules to avoid its occurrence. He sometimes visited his colliery, and occasionally looked at the plans, but has never seen any alterations marked as suggestions of improvement in the ventilation. Last year there was an explosion in his pit, and one person was killed by fire-damp; but, the verdict was not officially communicated to him, neither did his coal-agent send to him any notes of what was said upon the occasion.

Now, we will do so much violence to our own sense of right as to assume that the owner of a colliery, or factory, or any great establishment to which there are attached serious responsibilities, is entitled to shift

every atom of the responsibility from his own shoulders upon those of a general manager. He is responsible for nothing but his manager. At least, then, he should have ample assurance of his manager's efficiency, and should see enough of him to know that he is a sufficient steward as to matters which cannot be wholly represented on a balance-sheet. The owner of this colliery, like many other owners, left all his duties to be discharged for him by his general manager, and that gentleman, whose most serious responsibilities are under-ground, deposes that his "duties are above-ground altogether." In the last two years and a-half he has been under-ground once only; that was eighteen months ago, "on one particular occasion." Even when the terrible catastrophe occurred, and one hundred and fourteen of the men under his control lay dead through neglects for which, if the owner be credited, he was responsible, "I did not," he says, "go down the pit, because, as I knew nothing of gas, I thought it would be useless." To be sure, it may be said, he was not wanted down there to show knowledge of gas, but to show sympathy with the great grief by which he was surrounded—to obey the human impulse which it pleases few men to see checked on any such occasion. As general manager of the colliery, however, this gentleman declared himself to be of no use under-ground; he neither could advise the living, nor assist in looking for the dead. "I don't consider," he said, "that I have experience enough to undertake the management of the under-ground portion of a colliery." The working under-ground was trusted wholly to the overman, with the reserve that he should make no sort of alteration, through meeting with faults, or for other reasons; that he should make no new heading or air-way until he had applied for leave to the general manager, who was without experience enough on matters of that kind. He was to do nothing "without first consulting me, and ascertaining my opinion."

The general manager throws the responsibility for under-ground works on the overman, whom he confesses both that he is incompetent to direct, and that he does direct. He has depended also for his knowledge of the mine upon the under-ground agent, who should be a mining engineer. There have been, during the last two years, two persons, A. and B., in this position on the colliery of which we are now telling the story. Their duties were not defined in writing: they paid the men's wages, and kept the books; the workings ought to have been inspected by them twice a week. Mr. B., being delicate in health, went down once a fortnight, on measuring day, and had resigned his situation at the colliery altogether, a few days before the explosion. It was not immediately filled up. Mr. A., who was mineral or under-ground agent until the last February twelvemonth, since which time the works have been very much extended, called to mind suggestions made to him by the government inspector: among which, one was the establishing of a communication between the old and new pits: another, the use of more than one air current. He reported to the general manager some of the suggestions. "I resigned," says Mr. A. "You may draw your own conclusions as to the cause. Probably I might have seen something looming in the future."

Mr. B. said he had always looked upon the general manager, and not himself, as the mineral agent of the colliery. The general manager had told him, when he entered its service, that "the greatest thing he had against Mr. A. was that he interfered too much with his business as manager of the mine." Mr. B. complained to no purpose of the air in the pit, although without anticipating an explosion. "I thought," he says, "it was not pure enough for the health of the men; and I would have altered it if I had had the under-ground management of the mine at that time."

The overman who had charge of the under-ground arrangements could not, as we have seen, make any sort of alteration in the state of the mine without the general manager's authority. He saw that the men did their daily work, and for his actual knowledge of the safe condition of the workings he depended on the firemen. There were three firemen, and their main duty—the general manager deposes that he cannot tell precisely what their duties were—their main duty was to go into the pit, carrying safety-lamps, at about three o'clock every morning, traverse the galleries, and enter all the headings and stalls in which colliers worked, trying the air with their lamps, and, where they found much gas, putting up some cross timbers as a danger signal, to prevent the men from entering. When they had reported to the overman that all was safe, the colliers went down to work with naked candles. In a well ventilated mine, the right discharge of the office of fireman, though highly essential, would not be a matter of such pressing moment as in the case of a mine throughout the greater part of which air never could be pure; in which the foul gas burnt, as a matter of course, in corpse-lights on the points of the men's candles; from which engineers had shrunk; against which the government inspector had remonstrated; and which there was no manifest intention of improving. Upon the right discharge of their trust by the firemen, morning after morning, hung (as they should not have hung) the lives of many men from day to day. No collier liked to go into his working unless by some arrangement of the tools a sign was left that the fireman had been there before him. For example. One of the witnesses in the case of which we are speaking, a collier named Morgan, tells how, a few days before the rent

explosion, another collier named Davis came to meet him at the parting belonging to his stall, and bade him stop. It was then about seven o'clock; and he said, "No fireman has been at my stall to-day. My ticket is in the same place as I put it last night." "I told him," continued Morgan, "not to go to the face of the stall. He is since dead. My step-son, who has since been killed, said there was no air—the candle did not move in the air-way. I took the candle in my hand, and tried the stall. The air was very bad, and there was a cap on the candle of an inch or an inch and a half. The flame did not move, there not being the slightest air there. I went back with my candle, buttoned my jacket over my head to carry some air with me, and put the boys to stand back. I then went very cautiously to the face of the work; to see whether there was a danger mark there. I lessened the flame of my candle down to one thread of the wick, but the cap did not alter; the colour of it was red. Having reached the face, I held the candle up to the top to try the air, but it would not catch. There was no mark of the fireman having been there. I did not complain about the gas, because I did not like to be turned off, as I believed I should be if I complained. After the great strike the men did not much like to complain."

The great strike of these men took place in the first sixteen weeks of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-four. A collier describes it who was injured, but not killed, in the explosion. He is himself a very fair type of his ignorant and somewhat reckless class. He went, as no discipline on the part of the overman, but only a printed rule which nobody attended to, forbade, opening doors which it was essential to the ventilation to keep shut, in order, like his comrades, to fetch plates required for his work wherever he could meet with them in the old workings. He was never stopped for want of air—was satisfied if it was "middling good"—and was not afraid, though more than once his candle had exploded it. When tickets were given as marks to be used by firemen, this man lost his on the first day. But, he and his fellows were not heedless on the one point they could understand. They knew that their lives depended on the right discharge of duty by their firemen. "The reason why we struck," this man says, "was because they wanted to change the firemen; the old firemen, who had been there for some years, being discharged. Some smaller differences had been settled between the masters and the men. On the first of January, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, the men were prepared to go to work, but found, when they got there, that new firemen had been appointed, in consequence of which we all refused to go down to work. We had great faith in the old firemen, and the reason I did not go to work was, because I was afraid the new firemen were inexperienced. The life of every collier in the pit depends upon the experience of the firemen. I was present when the men waited on (the general manager) to tell him that we were afraid to go down to the pit because the firemen were not proper. We spoke in Welsh, and complained that the new firemen were not able. The manager said that he would have a man to go with them to try them. The colliers asked him, 'Why did you discharge the old ones?' He said 'That is nothing to you; I discharged them because I chose to do so.' Upon that the colliers said they were afraid to go down with them. That was the truth. I was afraid because I knew nothing about them. The men would not go to work, and they stood out for sixteen weeks."

That the men were right we are less convinced by their own showing than by that of the general manager himself, who when examined before the coroner on the subject of the strike occasioned by his dismissal of two firemen, confesses, "They were good firemen. I have no doubt that the men generally had confidence in them, but I had PRIVATE REASONS for discharging them. I would not tell my reasons then, and will not now. Before that time, the colliers had a voice in the appointment of the firemen."

Of the general manager's two firemen, whom we will call Roland and Richard, Roland was especially distrusted by the men. They had no objection to work with him as a collier, they said, but would not have him as a fireman. The appointment was persisted in. Eight or nine months before the great explosion, Richard had informed the general manager that there was fire or foul air in one part of the workings. Roland denied the fact; said, "That is his lies." Richard said, if the manager did not believe him, he would never go down the pit again; and, adds the manager, he might have said that "some of these days we should see whether there was fire there or not." Richard accused Roland of deliberate concealment, and the two men fought upon the subject in the office of the general manager, who thereupon, as he himself says, "laid hold of Richard, and turned him out of the office. . . . The only fireman who complained to me of gas in the mine was Richard. The overman never complained about it, nor did Roland." Richard left the pit. Roland, promoted to the office of overman as well as fireman, was eventually, of necessity, discharged. Richard came back, and, as the manager now testifies, "was one of the first men down after the explosion, and assisted in getting the men out, until he fell down insensible himself." *He* did not feel that he must stay above-ground because he had no knowledge of gas.

There had been rules of the pit, which the manager was bound to bring distinctly to the knowledge of the men; but he had never either himself read to them the rules, or caused

them to be read; only they were given to an overman to be distributed. When there was an inquest, last September, on some men killed in the new pit, an English copy of the rules was nowhere to be found. Cautions sent down by the secretary of state had not been incorporated in them, and the general manager professed little or no recollection of any of the reports sent, or suggestions made to him, by government inspectors.

This was the general condition of the mine and the way in which it was managed previous to the accident. The narrative we have given, represents a state of things in no respect exceptional. A second Welsh colliery manager deposed that, fifteen months ago, he saw the particular colliery of which we speak, and found its ventilation better than in three others that he visited; said, "there must have been some mistake to have caused such an accident in a pit so well ventilated as this." There are better mines in Wales, and there are worse; nor do we find neglect of ventilation in Wales only. On one of the days occupied by the preceding inquiry, a pit in England having been neglected during a short holiday taken by the men, the fire-damp ignited as the first-comers were descending to work with their pan of lighted coal, and blew them high into the air. Ten persons, some dismembered and some disembowelled, increased the number of dead witnesses to a prevailing heedlessness of grave responsibilities affecting human life. We have seen nothing in the management of this one Welsh mine that is peculiar to the persons who have very properly been made responsible. The owner shifts responsibility upon the manager, who shifts responsibility upon the overman, who, nevertheless, cannot act upon his own responsibility, and finds it the least troublesome course to avoid making suggestions to his chief that imply outlay, with no obvious and prompt money returns. The overman follows his routine, and trusts to the firemen, who have traditions of the hurt done to himself by some predecessor, who got into the master's black book by a habit of reporting what it was not pleasant to hear. Thus, when Richard, before the quarrel in the office, privately told Roland of the danger threatened, Roland privately told Richard to keep everything as quiet as possible, and not say anything about the fire-damp. The men, grown used to "middling air," and caps upon their candles, bore quietly, rather than be set down as discontented fellows, anything short of suffocation. "I did not complain of the air," says one, "because the masters never pay any attention to the complaints of the colliers." That man had been specially warned, by the loss of three or four days' work, when he complained, on a former occasion, of his want of trams. Now, true as it may be, that the right way of doing business is that which gives to every one concerned in it the least degree of unnecessary trouble, it is certain that in this country we are apt to discourage persons who take necessary trouble of a sort that it is in a large number of cases utterly dishonest to avoid.

At about three o'clock on the morning of the fifteenth of last July, the three firemen went down as usual with their safety-lamps, and, traversing their several beats to examine the state of the workings, met again at the bottom of the mine. It was usual there to compare reports, and to entrust to one man who "got what was in the heads of all the three," the duty of reporting to the overman. When they had consulted, if they found any danger, they gave two knocks with a hammer—if no danger, three knocks—before being taken up. On that morning all was said to be as usual, except that one fireman told his companions he had seen fire in the upper stall of the straight heading. This was a new heading from which the works were being pushed on in advance of the air; and men who worked in it were content to do as they could until, as they said, they "got the air." The stall in question—David Morgan's stall—was twenty-two yards wide, one yard high, and sixty long. There had been, on a previous day, a fall in it, which caused additional escape of gas. One of the firemen remarked, that David Morgan was not working; he was gone to the sea-side, and, it being ascertained that cross-sticks were set up as a danger-mark against the entrance to that stall, the three firemen agreed that they would meet in it after breakfast, and in the mean time report all right. Three knocks were given with the hammer, and the firemen having gone up, "all right" was reported to the overman. David Morgan being at the sea-side, and a danger-mark having been put up, nothing was said by the firemen about danger in any stall.

The colliers went down. The weather at that time was very close. It had been tending for some days towards a July thunder-storm, which broke, on the succeeding days, over various parts of the country. The state and temperature of the air were of a kind to lessen ventilation in the pit; and of the furnace, which should create a draught to speed the air out by the upcast shaft, a witness says, "I thought it wanted some coals on."

On that morning a boy, named Llewellyn, it is said, went to the overman for work, and was told to go with his brother into David Morgan's stall in the heading. The overman says that he refused Llewellyn leave to work there or anywhere. The boy is dead; but, David Morgan's son, a collier, testifies, that he had asked the overman about him, who said, "I sent him and his brother to work in your father David's stall." Another boy, who was waiting to descend at the time of the explosion, testifies, that he and another had been told by the overman to go to work in David Morgan's stall.

It is believed that in this stall the terrible accident began. The boy Llewellyn was found dead at the entrance, with his day's food on his back and his cap blown from his head. Doors that secured ventilation were blown down, other collections of foul gas were kindled, more doors were blown out of their fastenings, and the result, as it is believed, of four or five successive explosions, was the sudden death of one hundred and fourteen persons. A fragment of the list of victims will suggest the horrors of the pit, when all was over. "There are five stalls in Salathiel's heading. From that heading were taken out dead, William Rees and his son, Jenkin Davis, Morgan Morgan, Matthew Miles, Matthew Evans and his son Philip, David Haines and Philip Evans. Two other dead bodies were found near Jacob's cross heading in the level. Griffith Williams's heading contains two stalls. There were taken out dead Evan Philip, David Morgan, and George Solloway and his son." A terrible suggestion of the grief that lives, was sent us by a correspondent, who, being by the pit mouth when the bodies were drawn up, and recognised by the distracted women gathered there, noticed a wife clinging to her husband's corpse, unwilling to believe him dead, who, seeing some neighbour with milk, obtained a little from her, and was tenderly endeavouring to make the dead man drink. While she was so engaged she stopped; for, there were carried by, the bodies of her sons.

A DAY OF RECKONING.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

Ike Branston was a man who respected his position, and spoke of it loudly and often; a man of the obsolete school, who withstood innovation on principle, and was accounted a perfectly safe man because he had escaped the prevailing epidemic of reform. He boasted perpetually of his successes in his profession, and delighted to be styled a self-made man; but his whole career had turned on the rotten hinge of expediency. He held severe theories of morals, though he was never averse to taking advantage in the way of business, if it were not likely to be found out; he put down his name on published subscription lists, because it was cheaper than private charity, and the odour of its sanctity travelled further. Was any acquaintance going down in the world, and to give him a shove or a kick might be profitable, Ike Branston was not withheld from administering it by any antiquated notions of former friendship or obligation. On the other side, did he see a man struggling bravely out of difficulties—one who was sure to win—he would stretch forth a finger and help him with Pecksniffian smile; then, when he was up and rising above him, he would point to him triumphantly, and cry, "I made him!"

Ike Branston had brought up his elder son Carl on his own principles, and the lad took to them as naturally as to his mother's milk. He was precociously shrewd, keen, and plausible—a veritable chip of the old block. The younger, Robin or Robert, was not deficient in ability, but his father and brother thought him a fool, and told him so. He did not value money for its own sake; where could be a stronger evidence of his weakness and folly? He had his friends and acquaintance in artists' studios and sculptors' ateliers; he lived happily, and not disorderly, amongst them, like a prodigal son, spending his quarter's allowance in three weeks, and then existing nobody exactly knew how. His father had assigned him his portion, and bade him go and ruin himself as fast as he liked, but never to trouble him again, or expect anything more from him. Robin shook his merry head, and departed thankfully. The paternal home was dismal, the paternal society oppressive; it was like escaping out of prison to have his liberty in the world, and Robin tried its delights like a judicious epicure, who, revelling in the luxuries of to-day, has still a thought for the pleasures of to-morrow, and will not risk his powers of enjoyment by over-indulgence. His heart was, perhaps, rather womanish, his mind too delicate and refined for a man who would do vigorous battle with life; but both were richly capable of seizing its subtle aroma of happiness and tasting it in its pristine sweetness and strength. Carl met his brother occasionally, and sneered at him, gave him good advice, predicted debasement, and laid his head on his pillow nightly in the flattering assurance that he was not as that prodigal, idle, wasteful, warm-hearted, generous, unsuspicious. No; Carl knew the ways of this wicked world to the inmost tangle of the clue, or thought he did, which is much the same.

Ike Branston had a niece living in his house, the penniless child of his sister; her name was Alice Deane. She sat at his table, aired his newspaper and slippers, mended his thrifty gloves, and made herself generally and unobtrusively useful. Ike did not notice her much; he used her as a machine; never thought whether she was pretty or ugly, stupid or clever, amiable or the reverse. She had been there sixteen years, growing gradually from child to woman, unheeded. Ike never cared for her or for Robin; he never had cared for anybody but himself and Carl, and, perhaps, a little while for Carl's mother, who was, a long time since, dead. It was on Alice Deane's account chiefly that Carl rejoiced in Robin's absence. Though Ike was blind to the patent fact, the brothers had both found out that she was wonderfully fair and attractive, that her solemn grey eyes were the most beautiful eyes in the world, and that her figure was moulded like a Dian.

Robin being out of the way, Carl took every opportunity of denouncing him as a libertine and ridiculing him as a simpleton in Alice's presence, and as she never said a word in his favour, Carl thought he was progressing famously in his suit.

He got his father's permission to marry her; old Ike thought if she had not a fortune she would save one, seeing that she had no hankering after women's finery, and was content to sit reading and sewing, drawing and singing, the year round. Carl redoubled his assiduities, but whenever he had made up his mind, and got ready a speech of proposal to Alice, something in her manner indiscribably icy and repellant drove him back again into himself. As far as selfish people ever do love, Carl loved Alice, and her pertinacious blindness to the fact half maddened him. He could not stir her from her impassibility one iota. Her eyes—ever pure, cool, and self-possessed, would meet his calmly; her cheek kept its uniform tint, her voice its even unembarrassed flow, no matter what he looked, spoke, or insinuated. Ike laughed at his son; he said, Robin would have wooed, won and married the girl, while Carl stood looking at her like grapes hung too high for his reach. Carl was mortified; he was afraid his father spake truth, and that Robin was Alice's favourite. So, in the end, he spoke to her.

It was one rich July evening when she was sitting in the dismal parlour reading. Even in there came a ray or two of dusty sunshine, and when he approached her, Carl, for a moment, fancied she blushed; but he was speedily undeceived; it was only the red reflection of a ray through the crimson window-curtain, and her gown was blushing as much as she. He asked what she was reading; and, without looking up, she answered, "The May Queen."

"Can you leave it a minute, and listen to me?"

He spoke as if he were addressing her about the household accounts, which it was her province to keep. She read to the end of the page, shut up the book and, looking him straight in the face, said, "Well?" He stamped impatiently, walked to and fro the room, came back and stood before her: the faintest suspicion of a smile lurked about Alice's mouth, as she asked what disturbed him?

"It is you—you, Alice! Do you know how I have been worshipping you—adoring you—for months?"

"I'm surprised at you, cousin Carl, I thought you had more sense; I am not a goddess," was the quiet reply. There was no feeling in her face.

"How I have been loving you, Alice!" And he brought down his heel with another imperative stamp.

The girl's eyes went straight from his countenance, gloomy, passionate, and eager, to his impatient foot. "Carl," she said, gravely, "it is the surest sign in the world that I do not love you in return, because I never found you out. I never should have found it out if you had not told me. Perhaps it is a mistake."

"A mistake! What on earth do you mean?"

"What I say;—neither more nor less."

"I do love you, Alice; I would give my life for you;" and Carl sank his voice to a pleading tone.

"That is a mere phrase; besides, I know you would not. I don't think you would give a much smaller thing for me. There was a man came yesterday about a little sum of money that he owes to my uncle. I heard you tell him that if the debt were not paid within three days you should proceed against him; he said, with tears in his eyes, that he had not the means,—he pleaded his sickly wife and his family of young children, and you sent him away with your first answer. You have plenty of money, Carl; if I made a point of it, would you pay that man's debt?"

"Nonsense, Alice, you don't understand business," was the half-peevish, half-confused reply.

"Then I have made a poor use of my opportunities, for I have heard of little else all my life long; and I answer you, cousin Carl, you do not understand love as I understand it, and I have no love of my kind to give you."

"You are thinking of Robin, that poor, sackless fool! Why, Alice, he does not care for you as I do; he is a wild, extravagant, reckless scapegrace, who would make you miserable."

"He is a better man than you, Carl. I never shudder away from the grasp of his hand——"

"You shudder from my touch!"

"Yes; I am always conscious of your presence as I am conscious of thunder in the air before the storm bursts; when I hear you speak I think that is the tongue that would lie away Robin's good name: when you give me your hand in the morning I think how many unfortunate creatures' dooms it will sign before night, and how many it signed yesterday. When you laugh, I say, to myself, some poor soul is weeping, perhaps, for a hard deed of yours—no, cousin Carl, I do not love you; I never can love you."

"You give me my answer plainly."

"Yes. You said to me last night, 'Whatever you are, be practical.' I am practical, therefore. Now, may I go on with my story?"

He made her no reply, and she took up the book. Carl was standing with his back to the window, looking down on her pure, serene countenance. He liked her better than ever. Her reproaches did not sting him at all; they were weak and womanish, but natural, from a heart like hers: he could afford to smile at them.

"Alice," he said, ironically, "you are not practical—you are anything but practical. You are a poor dependant; a word from me to my father would make you homeless and destitute to-morrow."

"It is generous in you to remind me of it, Carl—generous and kind."

"It is true. With me you would have position, money, society, if you wished. I am rich; my father is rich and old—he cannot live much longer. I would restore to Robin part of his share which his prodigality has justly forfeited——"

"Carl, if you were to talk till midnight you could not change my mind or your own nature. You are rich. Well, there are women to be bought; for myself, I would rather toil and go clad in hodden grey than be your wife—to be worshipped six months, and neglected afterwards to the end of my days."

"You are very hard, Alice."

"For you, Carl, hard as the nether millstone, and not hard only. Be satisfied. If I were caught by the name of your wealth, I should come to hate you—I should grow wicked. Go away, Carl; you and I have nothing in common—go!"

She was moved at last. Her grey, calm eyes had a tawny, dangerous spark in them; her heart was not marble—it was smouldering fire, rather.

Carl took heart of grace. "She is worth winning—she may be won: only let me find out the way," he said to himself. And, feigning a deep depression, he slowly left her, and went straight to his father.

The old man was in a sarcastic mood. "Carl Branston plays Lothario ill," cried he. "Pluck up a spirit, man, or ask Robin to give thee a lesson how to woo. Robin has her ear."

"Do you think Robin loves her, father? I told her he did not."

"She knows better than thee, Carl, and laughed at thee for a liar."

"She never laughed."

The young man gnawed his lips, and gave his father a darkling look. He was wondering why Alice preferred his brother, whom he despised and hated, to himself, who was handsomer, cleverer, richer, and more respected. People loved Robin, but they respected Carl, who had a position and money, and a hard, sensible head. Ike Branston fathomed his son's thoughts.

"Thou'rt a marvellous proper man, Carl," said he, laughing. "What a pity Alice don't fancy thee, or that thou don't fancy another woman! When I was thy age I was not so easily downcast. Thy mother said nay a full score of times before she said yea."

"Alice is of a different sort. You would not tell me to try her again, if you had heard her bid me go ten minutes since."

"I'll not keep her here to vex thee, Carl. Say the word, and she shall go to Margery Pilkington to-morrow. She will be glad enough to come back, even with thee, a month or two hence."

Carl's face cleared. "Robin would never find her out there," he said.

"Yes, man, he'd find her in Hades, if he loves her. But you must be beforehand with him—assiduous, flattering, mind that. Take her gifts—bless me! I'll court her for you, if you don't know how. I should like to hear her say nay to Ike Branston!"

"Let her alone, father, but send to Margery Pilkington to come and fetch her. Robin must not hear of it." And Carl went out.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

Margery Pilkington was a woman whose bones were as brass, and her blood as iced mud: a slow, stagnant woman, who never did a kind deed, or thought a good thought, but who was congealed into a statue of pharisaical hypocrisy and earthy selfishness. She was Ike Branston's cousin—Ike Branston's feminine counterpart divested of his sleek beauty; he was a very handsome old man, she was plain to repulsiveness, but their minds were stamped with the same die, and their views bounded by the same limit. Margery Pilkington lived in a square, obtrusive-looking brick house overlooking the village green of Beckford, at the further side of which was a row of ugly cottages, her property. From her parlour window she could exercise surveillance over her tenants, and both them and her servants she ruled arbitrarily; she ruled Alice Deane arbitrarily also when she got her—Cousin Ike had said the girl was wilful and obstinate, and wanted bringing to reason. Margery undertook the task with unctuous satisfaction.

Did Alice want to walk by the river-side, she must sit in-doors, and refresh herself with darning stockings; did the north-east wind blow, she must go out for her health; had she a headache, it was affectation, she must work at a solid, improving book; was she deep in some interesting study, she must relinquish it. Well, indeed, did Mistress Margery Pilkington understand the art and science of thwarting everybody in an aggravating, considerate way, which could not be complained of, for it wore the guise of kindness. Alice contradicted her once, but she scolded and fretted for an hour without taking breath, and impressed such an awful picture of her sensitiveness on her victim's mind that she felt no inclination to transgress again. Alice saw through her feint, and despised it, but submitted to captivity with a tolerable grace.

Carl Branston came down to Beckford in buoyant humour when his cousin had been there about ten days—long enough to weary of Miss Margery Pilkington's purgatorial discipline. He had made a successful speculation, and chose to augur therefrom good to

his suit. Alice received him cordially: any change was better than none.

"Take me home, Carl," whispered she, forgetting the scene before she left her uncle's house, and reverting to cousinly familiarity.

He seemed gratified. "Are you softening towards me, Alice?" he asked, gently.

She drew up her slender shape with an air of indescribable haughtiness, and, looking him in the face, said, "So I have been sent here for a punishment, as a banishment? Very well, Carl Branston; I will stay here till doomsday rather than be your wife. Did you imagine that I did not loathe you sufficiently before, that you descend to persecution?" And she turned from him as one would turn from some villainous creeping thing, and left him feeling a very mean and beaten scoundrel indeed. Carl had not the courage left to present the fine gauds he had brought for her; he returned to London with them in his pocket, and venomed rage in his heart.

Margery Pilkington was, according to her own statement, a martyr to tic douloureux; she was afflicted with it the next day, and, after a morning of rampant ill-humour, during which it is a question whether she or Alice suffered most, she retired to her chamber and shut herself up. Alice put on her hat with a sigh of relief, and sauntered away to the river-side. Beckford river was a famous trout-stream; what more natural than that when she was come to a pretty bend near the wood she should see a man fishing, and that this man should be cousin Robin? and what again more natural than that meeting him thus accidentally, they should each exclaim how glad they were, and then wander on together through the shady glades of Beechwood, talking about all sorts of interesting things which nobody need listen to unless they like.

"I heard of you yesterday," said Robin, "and made my way down here directly. Why have they banished thee, my pretty Alice?"

Alice told him something, and he guessed the rest.

"That brother of mine is a sorry knave; I'll disown him!" cried he, with a laugh; but she knew very well that Robin would have shared his last crumb with his greatest enemy; he could not remember an injury, and, as for being jealous of Carl's attachment to Alice, he thought it just the most natural thing in the world.

Robin had a very pleasant voice, full and rich in tone, but he could sink it to the softest of whispers, and what he said next, the little birds in the tree-tops could scarcely have heard if they had listened with all their might. It was, "Alice, love me; let me take care of thee; I've loved thee sixteen years, ever since they brought thee, a little shy lassie that could scarce crawl, and set thee down between me and Carl, and told us to be brothers to thee."

Alice was not coquettish, but there was a mischievous sparkle in her eyes as she said: "And you fought the next day who should love me best."

"And I beat Carl. Answer me, Alice; will you love me?"

"I think you have earned some reward by your faithfulness, Robin," said she with a blushing smile.

"Then promise to give it me."

He held out his hand, and she put hers into it like a tiny fair dove hiding in its nest, and as there was none but the wood creatures to behold, and the winds to whisper it, he made her soft warm lips seal the promise then and there made and recorded at once.

It was mid-afternoon when they met; it was shading into twilight when they separated at the top of Wood-lane; Alice crossing the Green, armed at all points against Miss Margery Pilkington's ill-humours, and Robin, not less blissful, wending towards his home. Before parting Robin pleaded for permission to beard the lioness in her den, but Alice said, not for worlds; so he mentioned the probability of his fishing all next day, and she hinted that most likely she should stroll on the banks at some hour between sunrise and sunset. "The river-side is always so pleasant in June!" said she, archly.

When she came into Margery Pilkington's puritanical little parlour she looked as much out of character as a portrait of Hebe in a cellar. She had a rich carnation on her lip and a rose on her cheek, as bright as ever bloomed in garden, and a lustre in her large eyes lighted at love's own torch. Her protectress sat there with her face swathed up in flannel like a corpse, and wearing her most awful scowl. She looked up at Alice, and snorted angry disapproval of her appearance.

"You have been in fool's paradise," said she grimly; "Carl yesterday, Robin to-day; you'll go straight back to your uncle Branston to-morrow, treacherous girl."

Alice blushed a confession, and begged to stay where she was.

"I like the country: Beckford is pretty; let me stay, Miss Margery; it is nicer being here than in London."

"I dare say it is—Beechwood and Robin Branston understood," retorted Mistress Pilkington. "You are an ungrateful creature; I cannot think where you expect to go to when you die. Has not Ike Branston been a father to you?"

"No."

"No! What do you mean? He has fed you, clothed you, lodged you for sixteen years, educated you."

"Robin taught me all I know."

"And so, forsooth, the pupil must show her gratitude to her master by loving him? Nothing less will serve?"

"Nothing less."

"And the young man will lose all for you—fool!"

"Lose all?"

"Yes. You marry Carl, he will reconcile his father to Robin, and the prodigal will get his share at the old man's death. You marry Robin, he will not get a penny. You may both starve, and I'd have you remember that when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window."

Alice treated the warning with indifference; "We shall want but little, and surely we may earn that little," she said, quietly.

Mistress Margery laughed her harsh discordant laugh.

"I would not keep you from your will if it lay with me—what is to be will be, for all I can say, but I shall not get into trouble with Cousin Ike about the business. Get away; pack up your traps to-night; to-morrow morning you march."

Margery Pilkington's word was not to be gainsaid, and Alice departed to her chamber silent and obedient.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

About three weeks after their encounter by the river, Robin and Alice appeared at Ike Branston's breakfast table together.

"Father, we are married;" said Robin, without any repentant, theatrical demonstrations; he stood firmly, holding his wife by the hand.

"O, indeed, married?" echoed the old man.

Carl's face had worn its down-looking expression ever since Alice administered her last rebuff, and it did not lighten at this news, as may be supposed. Mistress Margery Pilkington had not thought it necessary to communicate to her cousin that the charge he had confided to her tender guardianship had evaded her watchfulness and disappeared one morning early; therefore Robin had the felicity of breaking the ice with his relatives. His father received the announcement without evincing surprise or displeasure; he looked quite cool, but nobody who knew Ike Branston liked his cool manner; it meant evil.

"Uncle, don't be angry with Robin, for my sake;" Alice pleaded softly; she understood the dangerous warning of his countenance.

"Angry! I am never angry; daughter, take a seat; Robin, have some coffee: Carl, help your brother," said Ike with his circular smile, which was a triumph of bland hypocrisy: he laid an unctuous stress on the changed position of Alice as his daughter; he used to call her niece; never by her name, which was also the name of his deceased wife. Robin, without a suspicion of the genuineness of his father's cordiality, threw off his rather proud yet anxious restraint, and glided into conversation with him about his intentions.

"And pray where have you pitched your tent, Robin; where are you going to live? You begin housekeeping, of course?" asked Ike gravely.

"Why, yes—I suppose so. Can you recommend me a house, sir," his son said, with great cheerfulness.

"There is an excellent mansion to let in Great Howard Street—if it would not be too small for you—rent between three and four hundred; it is beautifully furnished, and nearly new. The Earl of Monypence had it for a few seasons. Here, my dear, is something towards your housekeeping expenses;" and, with exquisite grace and urbanity, Ike handed his daughter-in-law a five-pound note, which he had been ostentatiously extracting from his pocket-book, as he suggested a residence for the young pair. Carl seemed inwardly diverted at the irony of his parent, but he kept his eyes on the morning paper, except for the instant when the bank-note was presented, but he did not succeed in seeing its amount, and was rather afraid that a spasm of generosity might have seized the old man at the sight of his younger son's beaming countenance. Robin, in the same doubt, thanked his father warmly; but Alice was uneasy, and was relieved when the dismal hall-clock struck ten, and Ike and Carl rose to go to their office.

"Let me know where you settle down, Robin; I suppose we shall see you from time to time; I don't like family dissensions, you are aware; good morning," and with a hurried yet expansive hand-shaking Ike ushered his younger son and Alice out into the street; Carl gave his brother a cool nod, and overlooking his cousin altogether, marched away, as if the most pressing affairs called him.

When Robin and Alice had got a few hundred yards from Ike Branston's house, Alice whispered—

"It was only a five-pound note, Robin."

Her husband looked surprised for a moment, and then broke into a merry laugh.

"We ought not to have expected anything better," he said. "Never mind, Alice, I'll turn photographer, painter of portraits for the million—anything. Let us go and look at that cottage we saw advertised in yesterday's Times—it will suit our fortunes."

"I'll be as happy as a queen there, Robin," Alice gaily responded, and she stepped out cheerfully, as if her heart were lightened of a load; she was, indeed, glad that no form of dependence on her uncle was to mar her new life; and to be free of him and poor, was preferable to a luxurious slavery.

The cottage in question was far enough out of London to look pleasantly rural in its little garden fenced off from some meadow fields by a wire fence, and hidden from the road by a very high, thick, and closely-clipped hedge. It was an old cottage with pebble-dashed

walls, and a porch so overgrown with creepers as to resemble a gigantic bee-hive; its windows were fantastically pointed, its chimneys twisted, and its rooms low and picturesquely inconvenient, but Alice's fancy beautified it in a twinkling. The parlour should have a pale green paper, and crimson carpet and curtains: here should be Robin's books—he had quantities of books—there his piano; the pretty statues which he had given her, and the handsome French clock, would ornament the chimney-piece.

"It will do beautifully!" the young wife exclaimed; they might look at twenty houses, and not find another so exactly suited to them in every respect. To be sure, Robin struck his tall head twice in passing through the chamber doorways, but that gave Alice the opportunity of standing on tip-toes, and kissing away his ruefullook,and of whispering what a bonnie, happy little nest she would make of it for him. So the cottage was taken and furnished, and still in the glow of "Love's young dream," Robin and his wife took possession of it.

It was a very easy, indolent, untroubled life that they led for the next six months. The summer evening walks over, the long dark lamp and fire-light hours came, when Robin read out some new book, while Alice sewed; and the little green and crimson parlour was a picture of home happiness worth seeing.

One evening, laying down his volume, he said: "By the bye, Alice, my half-yearly allowance from my father is nearly a month overdue. This is the first time I have let the day slip. I'll go to Wormsley to-morrow." Alice said it would be very acceptable, as she smiled and shook out a little cap of delicate, flimsy lace that she was busy concocting. Indeed, for a week or two back, the money in her housekeeping purse had been ebbing very low, and there was no corresponding flood.

The next morning Robin went into town by the omnibus, and waited on Mr. Wormsley, his father's banker, to draw his money. The banker received him with a stiff courtesy. He said that he had not received any instructions from his respected friend, Branston, to pay it; indeed, he had understood from that gentleman that Mr. Robert's allowance ceased from the day of his marriage, on which happy event Mr. Wormsley begged to congratulate him.

Inexpressibly mortified and embarrassed, Robin returned home and told his wife the result of his expedition. She was dismayed. "Then we have nothing, absolutely nothing to depend upon?" she said. "Even this cottage furniture is to pay for! What are we to do, Robin?" Her husband made three or four turns in the little parlour, with a rather overcast expression, not unnatural in a man who finds himself suddenly deprived of all his means, while his cares are on the increase. It was with a rather doubtful air that he said at last, "I'll try photography, Alice; everybody loves to see his own portrait."

"But who will come out here, so far from town, to have it taken!" said the young wife, with a glance of regret round her pretty room.

"Nobody, pet, but listen. I have a plan in my head, only I want you to help me to perfect it. I must engage a suitable place in town; the 'bus will carry me backwards and forwards."

"No, Robin, no! You will be away from me all day; I cannot bear that," interrupted Alice, shaking her head. "I must be with you wherever you are. We must get lodgings where we can be together."

Robin kissed her. "I shall like that the best, by far; but it seems a pity to leave this nice little place," said he.

"But we must, Robin!" responded Alice, quietly. How often does that tiny word, must, overrule choice, inclination, desire!

And the change was made accordingly, not without some regrets expressed, and more restrained. There was incessant traffic from dawn to dark in the quarter where they fixed their new abode; and a plate affixed to the door-post of the lodgings announced to all the stream of passers-by that a photographic artist had his residence above. A large frame full of portraits also embellished the wall of the house; and Alice, from her seat in the window over it, could see many people stop to look at it. She watched eagerly for customers, but customers were not eager to come. By way of attracting the public eye, Robin took portraits of the postman, the two Lascar sweepers, and several other public functionaries, but without much effect. His friends came in relays, and smoked a good many cigars, and were taken "free, gratis, for nothing," several times over; but that could not be regarded as a profitable speculation. His first guinea, earned professionally, he received from his father, who would sit to him and pay like other people. The old man affected to think that his son was getting on famously. "I saw lots of people round the door when I came in," said he with a flourish of his hand towards that locality, "I suppose they are waiting until you are disengaged."

"I am afraid not, sir," Robin replied, with his light-hearted laugh; "in fact, father, you are my first patron."

"But you have made a fair start? Things look respectable about you, and respectability is all in this world: never forget that. I daresay you find Alice a thrifty manager? I never allowed waste in my house. How is she to-day?"

"Not well, father. But will you not go into the parlour and see her?"

So Ike Branston paid his compliments to his daughter-in-law, conversed with her for ten minutes in a fatherly way, alluded

pathetically to the dignity she was going to confer on him in making him a grandpapa, advised her to take care of herself, and departed, a luminous example of paternal decorum, without his son having found either opportunity or courage to mention the withdrawal of his allowance, and the painful inconvenience it was likely to be to him. Ike had a prescience of what Robin wanted to say, and staved it off skilfully; he did not want to come to an open quarrel with his son, for respectability's sake; but his heart was so bitter against him for the time, that he would have seen him starving with pleasure.

MONMOUTH.

The windows flash in Taunton town
With hurrying lights and muffled lamps,
And torches wander up and down
The streets, alive like scattered camps:
Far goes the word o'er field and fen,—
Monmouth is here with all his men!

Follow the Duke! and fife and drum
Startle the nightmared country round.
Hither in flocks the lads are come,
The gallant lads so staunch and sound;
Hither in troops they march all night,
And wives and mothers mourn their flight.

The whisper warns that close on dawn,
Before the village cock crows thrice,
He leads his merry people on,
And bravely flings the battle dice.
Look to your arms, lads; temper them well,
Lest that the unflesh'd steel rebel!

Auburn heads and grey are here,
Who grasp the pike from door to door;
Their sires who followed Oliver,
And work'd at Worcester, and the Moor.
Again the cheering of the town
They hear denounce a faithless crown.

They hear again the admiral's name
With his great master's coupled high,
And drink, in brown October, shame
To Papists, till the cup is dry.
March, merry men! and shoulder blithe
Pike and musket, bill and scythe.

Over the main street floats a flag,
The toil of twenty noble maids;
Soon will it stream a blushing rag,
But now 'tis bright with symbol'd braids;
And as the young men march beneath,
Its long folds wave and flatterers breathe.

Swings the banner from the hall
Where Monmouth holds his night carouse,
And views his eager followers fall
On bended knee, with loyal vows.
Sweet women blossom in the throng,
And pledge success in cup and song.

They pledge him deep, and to reply
He rises from his cushion'd chair;
The monarch's joy is in his eye;
He bows and drains the goblet there;
The kingly wine that crowns his brain
Runs royally through every vein.

He feels the purple warmth, the weight
Of golden glory on him shed:
He wins the battle lost by Fate,
He mounts the height that claims his head;
He mounts the height so many moan
Who find a scaffold for a throne.

"To horse!—to horse!" The war-steeds prance;
High vaults he with a chieftain's grace,
And many a lovely lady's glance
Dwells fondly on his fated face.
With warmer red their red cheeks bloom
While he waves round his princely plume.

And tears and sighs, and wild adieus,
Bubble beneath his bounding bliss;
Sad dreams of the past night refuse
Consoling by the soldier's kiss.
The mother and the bosom wife
Have dreamt dark issue to the strife.

The cheerless wife, the mother, clings
To him she loves, and will not part.
The young son up the stirrup springs,
To feel once more his father's heart.
The townsmen mount the grey church-tower,
All glorious in the morning hour.

"God speed to Monmouth! Speed and aid!"
They shout, as through the gate defiles
The gallant, glistening cavalcade;
And round the fresh-eyed pasture smiles,
Among the shining streams and shaws,—
"God speed to Monmouth and his cause!"

"Speed!" And the mimic echoes run
From hill to hill, and wail the word:
Over his head to greet the sun
Quivers the ever-cheerful bird.
The people shout, the clear chimes ring,
And the calm heavens receive their king.

Grandly to take what none contest
He rises, by all earth desired;
And the liege-limits of the west
With his effulgent eye are fired.
Duke Monmouth to his saddle-bow
Baring his lustrous head, bows low.

Low to the rising sun he bends,
And at the sight all heads are bare:
"Victorious we shall be, my friends!"
The host put up a hasty prayer.
"Speed the good youth," sigh distant dames,
"And rid the land of Papist James."

Again Duke Monmouth waves on high
His bonnet, to the Orient arch:
"See, gentlemen, our augury!"
And with fresh heart the men all march.
Loud, loud, the exulting music plays,
As broader spread the mounting rays.

And cries are yell'd, and caps are flung,
And up the ranks gay pass-words skim;
And oaths are sworn, and songs are sung,
And stories told in praise of him:
The darling son of English home!
The Cavalier of Christendom!

So lithe of limb, so fleet of foot,
'Tis he can throw, and leap, and laugh;
What marksman with his aim can shoot,
Or play the steel, or ply the staff?
And some have sisters whom he dower'd;
On all his kindly smiles have shower'd.

For luck, for luck, the boy was born;
He claims, and he shall have, his own!
And, hopeful as the springing morn,
They glisten down the curves of Tone.
That he'll be king, his life one stakes:
When he is king, a wife one takes.

King?—It is night, the dream is done,
And darkness snatches back the crown
That, golden, rose with morning's sun,
And dropp'd in blood o'er Taunton town.
King of a day, said tidings quick,
While expectation falters sick!

Rumour, with omens in her train,
Rustles and hums from hedge to hedge:
The battle's fought!—they lose! they gain!
Alas! delay, that dulls the edge
Of keenest blades! Nay, here rides one
To tell us if 't be lost or won.

And one rides in as one rides out;
And, when the wretched truth is told
At Taunton gates, who does not doubt,
And in the teeth of fate grow bold,
As if he held, to aid his chief,
A citadel in unbelief?

Drop down the veil on blood and tears,
Muffle the ear from women's wail;
Courage still sits with worthiest peers,
However basely fortune fail:
But cowards, in the battle's heat,
Carry in their own hearts defeat.

And he that rode Ambition's chace,
To shine with Europe's highest prize,
Now the most abject of his race,
Fawns to the hands that most despise.
He hath a love: in her embrace
To live, the man can bear disgrace.

And, though they bleed in Taunton town,
And round the Blood Assize crouch pale;
On no man's forehead comes a frown,
Nor women's curses when they wail,
Point the betrayer out for blame,
At mention of Duke Monmouth's name!

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

ISCHVOSTCHIK! THE DROSCHKY-DRIVER.

I AM not quite certain, I must premise, as to the orthography of the Russian Cabby's name. It is a national characteristic of the Russians, never to give a direct answer to a question; and, although I have asked at least twenty times, of learned Russians how to spell the droschky-driver's appellation with correctness, the philologists were for the most part, evasively dubious and readier to ask me questions about the head-dresses of the British Grenadiers, than to give me a succinct reply. Perhaps, they have not themselves yet made up their minds as to the proper position of the vowels and consonants in the word; for, though M. Karamsin is generally understood to have settled the Russian language some years since, considerable orthographical licence yet prevails, and is, to some extent, tolerated. A sovereign, less conciliating than the Czar Alexander, would very soon set the matter right by an oukase; and woe to the Russian then, who didn't mind his P's and Q's! As it is, there seem to be as many ways of pronouncing the cabby's name, as the American prairie. I have heard him myself called indifferently Ischvostchik, istvosschik, issvostchik, and isvoschchik. When you hail him in the street, you are permitted to take another liberty with his title, and call out lustily iss'vosch!

The choice of a subject in the driver of a public conveyance, in any city, familiar as he must be to every traveller, is not very defensible on the score of novelty; but—as I should not have the slightest hesitation in taking a Piccadilly Hansom cabman as a type of character, and drawing him as best I could to the life, if I had a salutary purpose to serve—I shall make no more bones about sketching the ischvostchik, than if he were a new butterfly, or an inedited fern, or a Niam-Niam, or any other rare specimen entomological, or zoological. And I have a plea, if needful, wherewith to claim benefit of clergy: this: that the ischvostchik is thoroughly, entirely, and to the back-bone, in speech, dress, look, manners and customs, Russian.

I was repeatedly told, while yet new to the Holy Land, that I must not take St. Petersburg as by any means a sample of a genuine Russian city. It was a French, a German, an English, a cosmopolitan town—what you will; but for real Russian customs and costumes I must go to Moscow, to Novgorod, to Kasan, to Smolensk, to Kharkoff, or to Vladimir. Error. I do not think that in the whole world there exists a nation so thoroughly homogeneous as Russia. In our little scrap of an island there are two-score dialects, at least, spoken; and a real north-countryman can scarcely make himself understood to a southerner; but here, if you will once bear in mind the two divisions of race into Great Russians and Little Russians, you may go a thousand versts without finding a vowel's difference in accentuation, or a hair's breadth alteration in a caftan or a Kakoshnik. The outlying nationalities subject to the Double Eagle's sway—the Fins, the Laps, the German Russians (Esthonians, Livonians, &c.), the Poles, the Cossacks and the Tartars, have of course their different languages and dresses; but they are not Russians: the Imperial Government recognises their separate nationality in everything save taxing them, making soldiers of them, and beating them; but the vast mass of millions—the real Russians—are from province to province, from government to government, all alike. At the end of a week's journey you will find the same villages, the same priests, the same policemen, the same Moujiks and Ischvostchiks, in appearance, dress, language, and habits, as at the commencement of your voyage. You who

have crossed St. George's Channel to Dublin, or the Grampians to Edinburgh, will remember the striking contrast between the cabman you left in London and the Irish car-driver who rattled you up Westmoreland Street, or the canny Jehu who conveyed you in a cab to your hotel in the Scottish metropolis. Take but a jaunt of half a dozen miles by rail out of London, and you will scarcely fail to remark the difference between Number nine hundred and nine from the Wellington Street stand, and the driver of the fly from the Queen's Arms, or the Terminus Hotel. They are quite different types of coachmanhood. But in Russia, the Ischvostchik who drives you from the Admiralty at St. Petersburg to the Moscow railway station is, to a hair of his beard, to a plait in his caftan, to a sneezing penultimate in his rapid Russ, the very counterpart, the own Corsican brother, of the Ischvostchik who drives you from the terminus to the Bridge of the Marshals in Holy Moscow, four hundred and fifty miles away. Stay: there is one difference in costume. The Petersburg Ischvostchik wears a peculiar low-crowned hat, with a broad brim turned up liberally at the sides; whereas, the Moscow cabby, more particularly, affects a Tom and Jerry hat with the brim pared closely off, and encircled by a ribbon and three or four buckles—a hat that has some remote resemblance to the genuine Connaught bogtrotter's head covering. Du reste, both styles of hat are common, and indifferently worn by the moujiks all over Russia, only the low-crowned hat being covered with a silk nap, and in some cases with beaver, is the more expensive, and is, therefore, in more general use in Petersburg the luxurious. Don't believe those, therefore, who endeavour to persuade you of the non-Russianism of St. Petersburg. There is a great deal of eau de cologne consumed there; the commerce in white kid gloves is enormous; and there is a thriving trade in wax candles, pineapple ices, patent leather boots, Clicquot's champagne, crinoline petticoats, artificial flowers, and other adjuncts to civilisation. Grisi and Lablache sing at the Grand Opera; Mademoiselle Cerito dances there; French is habitually spoken in society; and invitations to balls and dinners are sent to you on enamelled cards, and in pink billets smelling of musk and millefleurs; but your Distinguished Origin may come away from the Affghan ambassador's ball, or the Grand Opera, or the Princess Liagouschkoff's tableaux vivans, your head full of Casta Diva, the Valse à deux temps, and the delightful forwardness of Russian civilisation; and your Origin will hail an Ischvostchik to convey you to your domicile; and right before you, almost touching you, astride on the splashboard, will sit a genuine right-down child of Holy Russia, who is (it is no use mincing the matter) an ignorant, beastly, drunken, idolatrous savage, who is able to drive a horse, and to rob, and no more. Woe to those who wear the white kid gloves, and serenely allow the savage to go on in his dirt, in his drunkenness, in his most pitiable joss-worship (it is not religion) in his swinish ignorance, not only (it were vain to dwell upon that) of letters, but of things that the very dumb dogs and necessary cats in Christian households seem to know instinctively! Woe to the drinkers of champagne when the day shall come for these wretched creatures to grow raving mad instead of sillily maudlin on the vitriol brandy, whose monopoly brings in a yearly revenue of fifty millions of roubles (eight millions sterling) to the paternal government, and when the paternal stick shall avail no more as a panacea. I know nothing more striking in my Russian experience than the sudden plunge from a hothouse of refinement to a cold bath of sheer barbarism. It is as if you left a presidential levée in the White House at Washington, and fell suddenly into an ambuscade of Red Indians. Your civilisation, your evening dress, your carefully selected stock of pure Parisian French, avail you nothing with the Ischvostchik. He speaks nothing but Russ; he cannot read; he has nothing, nothing in common with you—closely shaven (as regards the cheeks and chin) and swathed in the tight sables of European etiquette, as you are—he in his flowing oriental caftan, and oriental beard, and more than oriental dirt.

It is possible, nay a thing of very common occurrence, for a foreigner to live half a dozen years in Russia without mastering the Russian alphabet, or being called upon to say "How do you do?" or "Good-night!" in Russ. Many of the highest Russian nobles are said indeed to speak their own language with anything but fluency and correctness. But, unless you want to go afoot in the streets (which in any Russian town is about equivalent to making a pilgrimage to the Holy House at Loretto with unboiled peas in your shoes), it is absolutely necessary for you to acquire what I may call the Ischvostchik language, in order to let your conductor know your intended destination. The language is neither a very difficult, nor a very copious one. For all locomotive purposes it may be resumed into the following ten phrases.

1. Na prava—To the right.
2. Na leva—To the left.
3. Pouyiama—Straight on. Right a-head.
4. Stoi—Stop!
5. Pashol-Scorrei—Quick, go a-head.
6. Shivai—Faster.
7. Dam na Vodka—I'll stand something to drink above the fare.
8. Durak—Fool!
9. Sabakoutchelovek—Son of a dog!
10. Tippian—You're drunk.

These phrases are spelt anyhow. The Ischvostchik language being a Lingua non scripta,

and one that I studied orally, and not grammatically; but I have written them to be pronounced as in French; and, if any of my readers, intending to visit Russia, will take the trouble to commit this slender vocabulary to memory, they will find them to all droschky-driving intents and purposes sufficient for their excursions in any Russian town from Petersburg to Kasan.

There are some facetious Russians who supersede the verbal employment of the first four of these phrases by synonymous manual signs. Thus, being always seated outside, and immediately behind the driver they substitute for "to the right" a sharp pull of the Ischvostchik's right ear. Instead of crying "to the left" they pull him by the sinister organ of hearing; a sound "bonneting" blow on the low crowned hat, or indeed, a blow or a kick anywhere is considered as equivalent to a gentle reminder to drive faster; and, if you wish to pull up, what is easier than to grasp the Ischvostchik by the throat and twine your hand into his neckerchief, pulling him violently backwards, meanwhile, till he chokes or holds hard? It is not often, I confess, that this humorous system of speech without words, is required, or, at least, practised in Petersburg or Moscow; but in the country, where Nous Autres are at home, these, and numerous other waggish modes of persuasive coercion, are in use for the benefit of the Ischvostchik. I remember a young Russian gentleman describing to me his overland kibitka journey from Moscow to Warsaw. He travelled with his mother and sister: it was in the depth of winter; and he described to me in freezing accents the horrors of his situation compelled as he was to sit outside the kibitka by the side of the Ischvostchik (or rather yemschik; for, when the droschky driver drives post-horses he becomes a postilion, whether he bestrides his cattle or the splash-board.) "Outside," I said, "was there no room inside the carriage?" "O, yes! plenty of room," was the naïve reply of this young gentleman; "but you see I had to sit on the box, because we had no servant with us, and there was nobody to beat the postilion. For the Russian driver on a Russian road, receives always as much, and frequently much more, stick than his cattle. (Ischvostchiks and Yemschiks are proverbially merciful to their beasts)." You have to beat him whether you fee him or not. Without the stick he will go to sleep, and will not incite his horses into any more rapid pace than that which is understood by a snail's gallop. It is a sad thing to be obliged to record; but it is a fact that even as money makes the mare to go, so it is the stick that makes the Russian driver to drive; and, just as in the old days of Irish posting it used to be necessary for the near leader to be touched up on the flank with a red-hot poker before he would start, so the signal for departure to a kibitka driver is ordinarily a sounding thwack across the shoulders.

In the two great capitals, happily, words will serve as well as blows; and to the Petersburg or Moscow Ischvostchik the intimation of "Dam na vodka," or even "vodka," simply, will seldom fail in procuring an augmentation of speed. But I grieve to say that the epithets, "fool!" "you're drunk!" and especially the terrible adjuration "sabakoutchelovek!" "son of a dog!" are absolutely necessary in your converse with the Ischvostchik, particularly when the subject of fare comes to be discussed. Every Ischvostchik will cheat his own countrymen, and I need not say will stick it on to foreigners in the proportion of about two hundred and eighty-five per cent. He will not have the slightest hesitation in asking a rouble for a fifteen kopecks course; and it is all over with you if you hesitate for a moment, or endeavour to reason out the matter (by nods, smiles, and shrugs) amicably. Pay him the proper fare, accompanying the payment by the emphatic "durak!" If this does not satisfy the Ischvostchik, utter the magical sabakoutchelovek in the most awful voice you can command, and walk away. If he presume to follow you, still demanding more money, I scarcely know what to advise you to do; but I know, and the Ischvostchik knows also, to his sorrow, what Nous Autres do under such circumstances. One thing, in charity and mercy, I entreat you not to do. Don't call in a police-soldier to settle the dispute. As sure as ever you have that functionary for an arbitrator, so sure are you to be mulcted of some more money, and so sure is the miserable Ischvostchik, whether right or wrong, whether he has received under or over fare, so sure is that slave of a slave either to have his nose flattened or a tooth or two knocked down his throat on the spot by the fist of the boutosnik, or police-soldier, or to be made to look in at the next convenient opportunity at the nearest police-station, or siège, and there to be scourged like a slave as he is, and like a dog as he ought not to be.

The way these wretched men are beaten, both openly and privately, is revolting and abominable. I have seen a gigantic police-soldier walk coolly down the Nevskoï, from the Pont de Police to the Kasan church, beating, cuffing across the face, pulling by the hair, and kicking, every single one of the file of Ischvostchiks who, with their vehicles, line the kerb. To the right and left, sometimes on to the pavement, sometimes into the kennel and under their horses' feet, went the poor bearded brutes under the brawny fists of this ruffianly Goliath in a grey gaberdine. I saw him remount the Nevskoï to his standing-place, exactly repeating his pugilistic recreation—saw it from a balcony overhanging this same Nevskoï, where I was standing with ladies, and with officials in clanking spurs. We had a

lap-dog too in the balcony, and in the saloon inside an Italian music-master was capering with his nimble fingers on a grand piano; while down below, the man in grey was felling the Ischvostchiks. What their offence had been—whether standing an inch too close to, or an inch too far from the pavement, I do not know; but I know that they were, and that I saw them, thus beaten; and I know that they took their hats off, and meekly wiped the blood from their mouths and noses; and gave way to not one word or gesture of resistance or remonstrance; but I know that, in the wake of that bad ship Greycoat, there were left such a trail of white vengeful faces, of such gleaming eyes, of such compressed lips, that were I Greycoat I would as soon pass through the nethermost pit, as down that line of outraged men, alone, at night, and without my police helmet and my police sword.

It is not pleasant, either, to know that every time your unfortunate driver happens to lock the wheel of a private carriage, he is due at the police-station, there to consume the inevitable ration of stick; it is horribly unpleasant to sit, as I have often done, behind a fine stalwart bearded man—a Hercules of a fellow—and, when you see the tips of a series of scarlet and purple wheals appearing above the collar of his caftan and ending at the nape of his neck, to be convinced after much elaborate inductive reasoning, that there are some more wheals under his caftan—that his back and a police-corporal's stick have come to blows lately, and that the stick has had the best of it.

A droschky is a necessary of life in Russia; it is not much a subject for astonishment, therefore, that there should be above three thousand public droschkies alone in Saint Petersburg, and nearly two thousand in Moscow. Besides these, there are plenty of hack-calèches and broughams, and swarms of small private one-horse droschkies. Every employé of a decent grade in the Tchinn, every major of police, has his "one-horse chay." The great have their carriages with two, four, and six horses; and when you consider that it is contrary to St. Petersburgian etiquette for a gentleman to drive his own equipage; that the small merchant or tradesman even, rich enough to possess a droschky of his own, seldom condescends to take the ribbons himself; and lastly, that if not by positive law, at least by commonly recognised and strictly observed custom, no coachman whatsoever, save those who act as whips to foreign ambassadors, are allowed to depart from the old Russian costume, you may imagine how numerous the wearers of the low-crowned hat and caftans are in St. Petersburg.

Here is the portrait of the Ischvostchik in his habit as he lives. He is a brawny square-built fellow, with a broad bully-beef face, fair curly hair cropped round his head in the workhouse-basin fashion, blue eyes, and a bushy beard. I have seen some specimens of carroty whiskers, too, among the Ischvostchiks, that would do honour to the bar of England. His face is freckled and puckered into queer wrinkles, partly by constant exposure to wind and weather, torrid heat and iron frost; partly from the immoderate use of his beloved vapour bath. The proverb tells us that there are more ways of killing a dog than hanging him—so there are more ways of bathing in Russia than the way that we occidental people usually bathe—the way leaning towards cleanliness, which is next to godliness. I cannot divest myself (from what I have seen) of the impression that the Russian homme du peuple is considerably dirtier after taking a bath than previous to that ablution. But I am launching into so vast and interesting a topic that I must be cautious, and must return to the Ischvostchik.

His hands and feet are of tremendous size: he is strong, active, agile; and his capacity for endurance of hardships is almost incredible. He wears invariably a long caftan or coat, tight in the waist and loose in the skirts, of dark blue or grass green cloth or serge, not by any means of coarse materials, and, if he be a well-to-do Ischvostchik, edged with two narrow rows of black velvet. This garment is neither single breasted nor double breasted—it is rather back breasted, the right lappel extending obliquely across the left breast to beneath the armpit. Under these arms too, and again if his Ischvostchikship be prosperous, he has a row of sugar-loaf buttons, sometimes silvery, more frequently coppery, but never buttoning anything, and serving no earthly purpose that I am aware of. This caftan is in winter replaced by the touloupe, or sheepskin coat, to which I have previously alluded, and to which I give warning I shall have to call attention, many a time and oft, in the progress of these papers. Under the caftan or touloupe exists, perhaps, a shirt (but that is not by any means to be assumed as an invariable fact), and certainly, suspended by a ribbon, a little cross in brass, or a medal of St. Nicolai, St. George, St. Serge, St. Alexander Nevsky, or some other equally revered and thoroughly Russian saint. "Few sorrows had she of her own—my hope, my joy, my Génévière," and few other garments of his own (though he has sorrows enough) has my Ischvostchik. A pair of baggy galligaskins, blue or pink striped, heavy bucket boots well greased, and he is nearly complete. Nay, let me not omit one little ornament wherewith he sacrifices to the Graces. This is his sash or girdle, which is twisted tightly round his waist. It always has been, in the beginning, dyed in the brightest and most staring hues; sometimes it has been of gold and silver brocade, and silk of scarlet and of blue; but it is most frequently, and when offered

to the view of you, the fare, encircling the loins of the Ischvostchik, a rag—a mere discoloured rag, greasy, dirty, frayed, and crumpled. The Ischvostchik has a brass badge with the number of his vehicle, and an intolerable quantity of Sclavonic verbiage in relief; and this badge is placed on his back, so that you may study it, and make sure of your Ischvostchik, if you have a spite against him.

This is the Ischvostchik who, with his beard and blue coat, his boots and breeches, his once scarlet girdle, his brass badge in the wrong place; his diminutive hat (decorated sometimes with buckles, sometimes with artificial roses, sometimes with medallions of saints); his dirt, his wretchedness, his picturesqueness, and his utter brutishness; looks like the distempered recollection of a bluecoat boy, and the nightmare of a beef-eater, mingled with a delirium tremens' hallucination of the Guildhall Gog transformed into Japhet in the Noah's Ark.

MICROSCOPICS.

Two instruments, in modern times, have enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge to an immeasurable extent. The scope of the one takes in everything that lies at a distance; or τῆλε, tele, in Greek, whence it is called a telescope; the other directs its penetrating glance to whatever is small, or μικρὸς, micros, and is therefore styled a microscope. The one helps us to look out into infinite space; the other assists us to dart an inquisitive glance into infinite minuteness and the endless divisibility of material objects. The two instruments, combined, make us ask ourselves whether there be any limit to anything, in any direction, outwardly or inwardly, in immensity or in infinitesimal exiguity. We learn that the universe is a vast aggregate of universes. We cannot conceive a boundary wall, where space ends, and there is nothing—absolutely nothing, not even extension—beyond. In fact, a pure and absolute nothing is an utterly inconceivable idea. Neither do we learn from improved telescopes of unprecedented power that such a thing exists as empty space, untenanted by suns, their systems, and their galaxies. On the other hand, the deeper we penetrate inwardly, the more finely we subdivide, the wider we separate atomic particles and dissect them by the scalpel of microscopic vision, the more we want to subdivide and analyse still. We find living creatures existing which bear about the same relation to a flea, in respect to size, as the flea does to the animal whose juices it sucks. The most powerful microscopes, so far from giving a final answer to our curious inquiries, only serve to make us cognisant of organised beings whose anatomy and even whose general aspect we shall never discover till we can bring to bear upon them, in their magnified state, another microscope concentrated within the microscope, by which alone we are enabled to view them at all. In short, as there is clearly no boundary to infinite space, above, below, and around; so, there would appear to be no discoverable limit to the inconceivable multiplicity of details of minuteness. A drop of water is a universe. The weakness of our eyes and the imperfection of our instruments, and not the physical constitution of the drop itself, are the sole reasons, as far as we know at present, why we do not behold infinity within the marvellous drop.

The grand start in microscopic power was made soon after the foundation of the Royal Society, in sixteen hundred and sixty. Robert Hooke's Micrographia, was published in sixteen hundred and sixty-seven, containing descriptions of minute bodies magnified by glasses. It is illustrated with thirty-eight plates, and remains an astonishing production. One of the grand wrinkles which he bequeathed to us, was his method of illuminating opaque objects by placing a glass globe, filled with salt water or brine, immediately in front of a lamp; the pencil of rays from the globe were received by a small plano-convex lens, placed with its convex side nearest the globe, which consequently condensed them upon the object. Shortly afterwards, the famous Leeuwenhoek astonished the world, in the Philosophical Transactions, by the discovery of numerous marvels, each one more surprising than its predecessors. Although the instruments he employed were superior to any that had been previously made, they were also remarkable for their simplicity; each consisting of a single lens,—double-convex, and not a sphere or globule—set between two plates of silver that were perforated with a small hole, with a moveable pin before it, to place the object on, and adjust it to the eye of the beholder. At his death, he left a cabinet of twenty-six microscopes as a legacy, to the Royal Society. All the parts of these microscopes are of silver, and fashioned by Leeuwenhoek's own hands. The glasses, which are excellent, were all ground and set by himself, each instrument being devoted to one or two objects only, and could be applied to nothing else. This method led him to make a microscope with a glass adapted to almost every object, till he had got some hundreds of them. The highest magnifying power was a hundred and sixty diameters, and the lowest forty. Leeuwenhoek was a striking example of the boundless fields of knowledge which are open to the explorer, without employing the higher powers which modern art has placed at his disposal.

But another microscopic era—an epoch of absolute regeneration, has commenced, dating from about twenty years ago. The real improvements effected of late in the instrument have justly raised it into high favour, both with learned inquirers into the mysteries of

nature, and with amateurs, who seek no more than the means of interesting information and varied amusement. Glasses have been made truly achromatic; that is, they show objects clearly, without any coloured fringe or burr around them; several clever contrivances for making the most of light have been adopted; and, besides all that, the mechanical working of the instrument has been made so steady, delicate, and true, that a very little practice renders the student competent to make the most of his tools. In consequence, there are very many persons, in England especially, who indulge themselves with the gratification of examining the secrets of organised objects; makers are pressed for instruments of a superior class, and the number of microscopic aspirants is on the increase every day.

Microscopes vary greatly in construction and price, and beginners are puzzled what to ask for. You may buy a microscope new—not a second-hand bargain—for from less than a pound to a hundred and twenty pounds and upwards. It thus appears that every one who is not quite pinched in circumstances, may treat himself to an instrument of some kind or other. But it is a comfort to know that, although with a hundred guineas' microscope you will have your money's worth in scientific skill in the perfection of beautiful workmanship, and in every microscopical luxury that art can supply, yet that an instrument costing less than one-tenth or one-twentieth of that sum, will open the portals of an unseen world, will afford immense instruction and endless amusement, and will even enable the industrious observer to discover new facts.

My own advice is, to treat a budding microscopist—even supposing that individual to be yourself—as you would fit out a lad with his first watch; set him up with a low-priced one—not a bad one—to begin with. He will pull it to pieces, to see how it goes; he will learn the uses of its parts; and he will thus have a better guess as to what sort of better one he would like to have next, and why. Simple microscopes, like Leeuwenhoek's, are little used now; nor would they suit schoolboys or adult learners, because they require Leeuwenhoek's eyes, tact, and dexterity, to derive from them all the profit obtainable. Of compound microscopes, composed of several lenses, there are numerous forms; the great point is, that they should be good of their kind; that is, with good lenses. Bad lenses are simply fit to play ducks and drakes with on the nearest pond. Smith and Beck's (of Coleman Street) Educational Microscope, costing ten pounds, is well spoken of by high authority. Even this is a large sum for many persons, who ought to see the things of which they read. Thus, it has been pertinently urged, that there is not a gardener who does not read of cells and woody tubes and spiral vessels, of stomates and epidermis. Without a microscope, what idea can he form of these bodies? And yet, since they constitute the wondrous mechanism of a plant, to know nothing certainly of their nature, is to know nothing distinctly of those workings in the life of a plant with which he has to deal, and with which he should be familiar. Again, we are told that everyone has the word adulteration in his mouth: lectures are given on adulterated food: books are written on adulterated objects of commerce: prosecutions are instituted because of adulterated articles of excise. In all these cases, the naked eye is powerless. It is only when armed with the magical powers of an achromatic lens that fraud becomes palpable to the senses. Certainly, a microscope of moderate cost might advantageously make part of the furniture or property of every reading-room that is not a mere news-room; of every public library and literary institution. So might persons of practically-useful callings—like the aforesaid gardeners—become more intimately acquainted with their friends and their foes; with the structure of the plants which constitute their crops, and with the mildew plants which ravage them. A subscriber, having swallowed suspicious tea for breakfast, might bring a pinch in a wisp of paper, and, by the aid of the searcher belonging to the club, could prove the presence of leaves that never grew on tea-shrubs; not to mention bits of Prussian blue, turmeric, and China clay. In vain would the grocer take his affidavit to the genuineness of the article. Seeing is believing. Think of that, ye mixers of chicory and roasted wheat with coffee, and of all manner of what-nots with chicory and roasted wheat themselves! Think of that, ye multipliers of chocolate by the agency of brick-dust, potato-starch, old sea-biscuits, ochre, peroxide of iron, branny flour, tallow, and greaves!

Beginners generally hanker after high powers; but high powers will not show them what they most want to see, as elementary peeps. With a high power you cannot survey the entire portly presence of a male flea, though his stature be smaller than that of his hen. You cannot, with it, haughtily scan from top to toe a parasite from a peacock's plume, or a human head. You cannot, by its aid, admire a miniature flower; such as a flowret from a daisy-club, or a member of a carrot-blossom society, in its complete contour of prettiness. You can only thus look at a fragment, a claw, a tongue, a jaw, a proboscis, an eye, a petal, an anther, or a bit of one. But it is as well to see how things look in their integrity, before you begin to dissect them into morsels. I confess it—my own working instruments (in stricter truth, my implements of recreation) are a humble two-guinea one, principally for opaque objects—of which I almost always use the second power only—and another of not

much greater pretensions, costing three guineas and a-half, which is more frequently than not employed (mostly for transparent objects) with a force below its utmost pressure of steam. I keep in reserve a several horse-power of amplification for extraordinary occasions. Both these microscopes are from Amadio, of Throgmorton Street, and are excellent of their kind, the more expensive one especially. Thus, for a sum which has not ruined me, and for which I can proudly show the stamped receipts, I am master of a higher magnifying power than Leeuwenhoek had at his command; notwithstanding which I have considerable doubts whether I shall ever rival his scientific eminence. You will understand that nothing herein premised is contrary to the possibility that I have safe in my closet a hundred-guinea microscope, for Sundays and holidays, unless you are thinking of presenting me with one, to aid my studies; in which case, I beg to withdraw the observation. But never forget that the excellence and value of a microscope do not consist in the greatness of its magnifying power. So far from that, if the instrument be muddle-headed and cloudy, the stronger it is the worse it is; and that instrument is the most efficient which renders the details of an object perceptible with the lowest power. Distinctness of definition—by which is meant the power of rendering all the minute lineaments clearly seen—is a quality of greater importance than mere magnifying power. Indeed without this quality, mere magnifying power ceases to have any value; since the object appears merely as a huge, misty phantom, like Ossian's cloudy heroes. It is more satisfactory to gaze upon a tight little yacht in bright, clear sunshine, than to be able to say you have seen the hazy outline of a vast line-of-battle-ship, looming indistinctly through a dense fog.

Leeuwenhoek's plan of having a multiplicity of instruments is a good one, for many reasons. Only to mention two; first, the saving of the time required to screw on, and unscrew, object-glasses. Secondly, the feebler instrument will act as the finder for the stronger. It will play the jackal to the lion, and often inform you whether there is anything worth looking at. In justice, be it added, that, in this country, Mr. Ross, and also Messrs. Powell and Lealand, enjoy a celebrity as microscope-makers, which they would not have attained if they had not deserved it; while, in Paris, M. Nachet's name is in every microscopist's mouth. There is an old-fashioned, little, simple, pocket microscope for transparent objects only—Wilson's, who flourished about seventeen hundred—which is a great favourite with many a peripatetic Paul Pry, and which is so convenient and entertaining as to be worth purchasing—good and cheap—when it falls in your way in its antique mounting.

The more powerful and refined the instrument, the more difficult is its management, and the greater are the skill and tact required to make it of any service to its owner. The apparent increase of size given to an object is usually spoken of in diameters, or the linear measure across it in any direction. Thus, fancy a circle magnified to another which has a hundred times its original diameter, and you have an increase of some considerable importance. A moon shining in the heavens with a diameter a hundred times that of our own monthly moon, or fifty degrees across, instead of half a degree, would be enough to make every sane man a lunatic and convert simple lunatics into raving madmen. Supposing it were possible to construct a microscope that should magnify, say a bull-dog, only sixty diameters, and that there were eyes capable of using such a microscope—what a monstrous bull-dog the image would be! Dr. Lardner coolly discourses of "the superior class of instruments, where magnifying power is pushed to so extreme a limit as fifteen hundred or two thousand." Of course first-class microscopes such as these, demand the most masterly skill from the optician, and are affected by infinitesimally small derangements. Mr. Quekett gives drawings of Naviculæ magnified twelve hundred and two thousand diameters respectively; only making you wish for a good microscope to bear upon these, the magnified drawings.

Again, for your comfort, dear reader with limited means like myself, one of the first microscopists living, M. le Dr. Ch. Robin, tells you that the magnifying power of the microscope can reach as far as a thousand or eleven hundred real diameters; that faulty modes of mensuration have been the only cause of making people believe they had obtained more considerable amplifying powers. It ought, moreover, to be known, he says, that when once eight hundred diameters are passed, object-glasses and eye-glasses which magnify further, fail to show the slightest novelty; not that the light is absolutely too feeble, or the colours of the object too diffuse, but simply because nothing additional is perceived beyond what was seen at seven or eight hundred diameters. It very rarely, or never happens, that there is any need to go beyond six hundred diameters for pathological observations; which in general require the highest magnifying powers. Bear in mind, also, what Leeuwenhoek did with a hundred and sixty diameters as his extreme power. Look at a cheese-mite with a power of thirty only, and you will be astonished if you have never so seen one before. Students, whose aims at starting are not quite extraordinary, will learn more than they can anticipate in their wildest dreams, if they have at hand the means of magnifying an object two hundred and fifty diameters, at the outside. Nevertheless, it is good for them to be able to get at a more powerful instrument from time to time.

If you can, get the maker himself to show you the special mode of handling the instrument you select. Generally, the thing to be viewed, on a slip of glass, is held down on the stage by springs, or is slipped through grooves, something like the painted slides of a magic lantern. In order that it should be clearly seen, the instrument must be brought to its exact focus (the Latin word for fireplace), or the point where the converging and concentrated rays meet, and which is, in fact, the point at which a burning-glass becomes incendiary. First, the approximate or rough focus is found, either by slipping the instrument through a sort of telescope tube, or by a rack-work; and then the very precise point is hit upon by turning a fine adjustment or micrometer screw. By pushing the slide or port-object backward and forward with the thumbs of each hand, the object is examined in its breadth and length; by turning the micrometer screw, in its depth and thickness. For, with a high power, you cannot see the whole of a single globule at once; an almost insensible turn of the screw brings a fresh portion of the object within the focus. But these little manipulations are not acquired without a fatiguing amount of practice, even though the image seen is reversed; that is, to make it go to the right, you must push the object-slide to the left, and to move it apparently upward you must direct your gentle touches downward.

Next, as to microscopic books. It is a good plan, when you want to comprehend a subject, to get together all the works that treat of it. On looking them through, the repetitions and the chaff are sifted away without much exertion of intellect, and you are then possessed of all the solid grain. Three modern works are so good, and so wonderfully cheap, that the young microscopist will assuredly purchase the entire trio: The Microscope and its Revelations, by Dr. Carpenter, with three hundred and fifty woodcuts; The Microscope, its History, Construction, and Applications, by Jabez Hogg, M.R.C.S., with upwards of five hundred engravings; and The Microscope, by Dr. Lardner, with a hundred and forty-seven engravings. The utility of the last work is much diminished by the want of an index, and still more by the affectation, after Cobbett, of not being paged; the only guide to its valuable contents are figures which refer to paragraphs. Quekett on the Microscope, Pritchard's Microscopic Cabinet, and Of Microscopes, and the Discoveries made thereby, by Henry Baker, may be profitably consulted. For physiological students, the works of Dr. Robin (in French) and of Dr. Hassell are of the highest interest.

But a microscope, and a library in alliance with it, alone, without plenty of objects to look at, are a theatre with its repertory of plays, but wanting scenery and actors. It is the opera-house and its accumulated scores, minus the fiddlers, the singers, and the dancers. Microscopists, therefore, must provide themselves both with living performers and inanimate decorations. Happily our artists do not ask the salaries of Piccolomini, or Rosati, and are content to wait the call-boy's summons in a green-room of quite modest dimensions and furniture. One or two shelves, filled with bottles, boxes, and pots, will serve as the menagerie for an innumerable company of first-rate performers, whose talents are unrivalled in their respective lines of parts. Thus, one of the celebrities who was among the first to make his appearance on the microscopic stage—the paste-eel—is open to an engagement at any period of the year. Simply take note that the paste proper for procuring the animalcules called eels, is made with flour and water only—that of the shops, containing resin and other matters, being unfit for the purpose. It must be made very thick, and well boiled; when cold, it should be beaten and thoroughly stirred with a wooden spatula. This must be repeated every day, to prevent mildew on its surface; previously examining a portion with a magnifier, to ascertain whether it contains any eels. If the weather be warm, a few days will suffice to produce them. When they are once obtained, their motion on the surface of the paste will prevent any mouldy growth, and it, therefore, requires no further attention. If the paste be too thin, the eels will creep up the sides of the paste-pot. In this case, a portion of very thick paste must be added, to preserve them. But the fresh supply must not be put upon them. They must be placed upon it. When you require her Majesty's servants in little to exhibit their graces, take a few drops of clean water, and put a small portion of the paste containing the eels into it. The water serves them as their bath and their dressing-room; after they have remained therein a minute or two, they may be taken out, and placed under the microscope, when the first act of the comedy will begin. Their versatility of talent enables them to play even minor parts in tragedy. They are a favourite prey of many aquatic larvæ. When the latter are starring upon your boards, put in a few supernumerary eels; they will be devoured without mercy, and will add much to the interest of the spectacle. You will have tableaux not inferior to those presented by the terrier Billy in his grand feat of killing a hundred rats in fifty seconds.

Paste-eels are still a mystery in their nature; they propagate only by bringing forth their young alive, as far as is known. How, then, do they come in the paste? if they lay no eggs, none can be floating about in the air. The boiling, one would think, must destroy any germs of life contained in the flour, or the water of which the paste is made. Most philosophers are afraid of admitting what is called spontaneous generation. It is not very clear why they fear it, since the admis-

sion would only be another form of expressing the unceasing as well as the infinite power, and the universal presence of the great Creator, who blew the breath of life into the nostrils of man himself.

Another set of players, much resembling the last, may be had from vinegar (homemade is the best, as the addition of sulphuric acid destroys your troop,) that has stood uncovered, got flat, and has a mouldy scum on its surface. Vinegar eels will grow so large as to be discernible by the naked eye. A writhing mass, either of these, or the former species, is one of the most curious spectacles which the microscopist can exhibit to the inexperienced observer. If the vinegar wherein such eels abound be but moderately heated at the fire, they will all be killed and sink to the bottom; but cold does them no injury. After such vinegar has been exposed a whole night to the severest frost, and has been frozen and thawed, and frozen again several times over, the animalcules have been as brisk as ever. Still, they prefer not to have an icy bed, if they can help it. In cold weather, if oil be poured on vinegar containing eels, they will creep up into the oil floating on the surface, when the vinegar begins to freeze; but on thawing it, they return to their original home. To add variety to their gymnastic exercises, and their plastic poses, drop a few grains of sand amongst the eels you submit to your microscope; it will be an entertaining pantomime to see them struggling and embarrassed, like sea-serpents caught in a shower of rocky boulders. The Anguillulæ generally, or eel-like worms, including those of wheat and river-water, possess the additional recommendation (which they enjoy in common with certain other animalcules), of reviving, after they have become as dry as dust, at however remote an interval. You may bequeath to your great-great-grandchildren the very identical acrobats whose agile feats you have applauded in your own day. It appears that the best means of securing a supply of paste eels for any occasion, consists in allowing any portion of a mass of paste in which they may present themselves to dry up; and then, laying this by so long as it may not be wanted, to introduce it into a mass of fresh paste, which, if it be kept warm and moist, will be found after a few days to swarm with these curious little creatures.

And so the actors attached to our minor theatre strut and fret their hour upon the stage. The downy atom which floats on the breeze, the drop of discoloured stagnant water, the tiny vermin which invade our dwellings, the crystal which shapes itself into symmetry unseen, the cast-off skins of despised creeping things, the change effected in natural tissue by disease, the parasitic moulds which threaten the life of higher vegetables, the nameless creatures that breed and batten in mud and slime, the rejected worthless sediment of far-fetched fertilisers, the organised means of self-preservation, well-being, and dispersion with which the humblest weed is endowed, the gorgeous items composing the wardrobe inventory of the beetle, the butterfly, the caterpillar, and the moth—all are replete with marvels which would harass the mind, if they did not entrance it with delight. At the same time that they fill the soul with awe and wonder, they tend, more than all the doctrinal arguments that have ever been urged, to impress a consciousness and an undisputed admission of the existence of omniscience and omnipotence.

With a telescope directed towards one end of things created, and a microscope towards the other, we sigh to think how short is life, and how long is the list of acquirable knowledge. Alas! what is man in the nineteenth century! It is provoking that, now we have the means of learning most, we have the least time to learn it in. If we had but the longevity of the antediluvian patriarchs, we might have some hope, not of completing our education, but of passing a respectable previous examination prior to our admittance into a higher school. The nearer we approach to infinite minuteness, the more we appreciate the infinite beauty and the infinite skill in contrivance and adaptation, which marks every production of the one great creative hand.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE BOATS.

A WRITER in this publication sang, some time ago, of a book. It is my intention to sing of a hero. Not of any of those pagan impostors unfavourably known to us through the pages of Lemprière. Not of any of the moderns, whose exploits may have won for them the title: Cromwell, Napoleon, Nelson, the heroes Hardinge and Gough, the heroes of Silistria, and of Kars. The personage whom I am about to celebrate occupies in my mind a position immeasurably higher than that accorded to any great ruler or great general. His worship was founded for me in my early youth, his altar was erected in the recesses of my boyish heart, and the flame kindled on that altar will burn true and constant to the end of life's third volume. I compare with the impression which he whilom made upon me, the impressions produced by other distinguished characters who have brushed against me in my after career; and the latter seem mere pigmies. After twenty long years he shall burst in upon my mature manhood as I sit surrounded by ledgers and day-books, and all the material attributes of most unheroic life; yet I recognise and bow down before the object of my boyish enthusiasm. He shall come from the Queen's Bench, in rags, barefoot, blind, like Belisarius; yet the magic which surrounds his name survives his fallen fortunes. He remains to me at forty

what he was at eighteen, the only being whom I ever admired or envied. The hero to whom I allude is the Captain of the Boats.

He was most commonly not only the captain of the boats, but the cock of the school, of undisputed fistic pre-eminence over five hundred and thirty Eton boys, and compelled to seek for rivals worthy of his strength and science among the bargees and boatmen who infested the banks of the Thames. Along the course of that silver-winding river, from Windsor Bridge up stream as far as Surley Hall, he ruled an absolute monarch—a water-god. He arranged the regattas and the races; he chose captains of the various boats; he got up the matches with Westminster; he issued ukases for the government of the aquatic world generally. In a school passionately addicted to water amusements, such a personage must necessarily occupy the position of the most successful general in a military republic. The Captain of the Eleven, who could alone be put in competition with him, has always appeared to me to fill a much lower place in public opinion; the cricketing, which he directed, not, after all, enlisting the general sympathies of the community. He was, too, in many cases, a wizen fellow, who could not have stood up for five minutes against the lightest weight in the eight, let alone its captain. It was impossible to look with respect upon such a character; all that could be said was, that he was the best cricketer in the school, as some colleger might be the best fives'-player, or some lower boy deep in the depths of the fourth form, might be the most expert at the game of rounders.

But, of how many other pursuits, pastimes, and associations did my hero not become, in virtue of his office, the director and chieftain! He usually chose sides at the "wall"—a winter game, nominally after the fashion of football, but in which the breaking of shins, bruising of faces, and, it has sometimes happened, the putting out of eyes, were the principal goals attained. He was the centre and sovereign of the "big levy"—a kind of social aristocracy which deserves a word of mention. It was a group formed of our notabilities and illustrations, who chatted together with their books under their arms while waiting for the summons to morning and afternoon school. How wistfully did we, the small fry, wander round the outskirts of this envied group. And how, like children of a larger growth, we formed ourselves into little gatherings and coteries of our own, to discuss our insignificant affairs with the same earnestness which was there bestowed upon matters of great public moment—the manning of the ten-oar, the match between the two sides of college, the challenge to be inserted in Bell's Life. I believe that this big levy was the truest aristocracy in the world, not even excepting the British house of peers. To gain admission to it, it was necessary to show some claim beyond age, size, or standing in school. It was the council of our warriors and athletes. Over it the captain of the boats ruled supreme. He was, in fact, the chieftain of our tribe, the guardian of our honour, the great representative looked up to to support, in all extra-scholastic pursuits and differences, the name and the reputation of an Etonian.

The mode of electing this great officer was, in my time, perfectly regular and fixed, and had probably been handed down by tradition from a remote period. It took place at the epoch of the great annual match, called Upper Sixes. The captain and the second captain of the boats tossed up for choice, and the person (I can scarcely bring myself to call him the boy) first named by either of them was considered next in succession to the captaincy, which he almost invariably inherited the following year. It very rarely happened that the same person filled the post during two boating seasons, as at the period of his elevation he was naturally one of the elder lads about to proceed to college, or to enter the army. In this election, unlike most other elections, I believe that favouritism very seldom exercised any influence, and the maxim of "The right man in the right place" received a practical illustration among us long before it was pressed upon the unwilling notice of the captains who had to choose sides for a more important contest. We had, I must tell you, such a thing as public opinion, by which the fittest candidate had long since been designated, and against which the cock of the school, no more than a prime minister—perhaps a good deal less—can in the long run hope to contend. So that the appointment was usually acquiesced in with at least as much readiness as has since marked our acquiescence in the appointment of admirals and generalissimos named to play out the great match between the two sides of Europe.

I have already intimated, and must repeat, that to us, the lower boys, this youthful son of Anak was altogether the greatest, the most stupendous, the most unapproachable of human beings. Every one recollects the story of Dr. Busby showing King Charles the Second over Westminster school, and keeping his hat on the whole time, because he would not have his pupils believe that there existed in the world any more important personage than himself. Our captain might have walked bare-headed behind the Emperor of Russia without in any degree lowering himself in our esteem. His position was, in fact, impregnable. He was usually pointed out to new boys on their arrival, pretty much as the late Duke of Wellington was signalled to the attention of country visitors in Hyde Park. It was a magnificent sight to see him in his official position on great state occasions,—the regattas of the fourth of June, and Election

Saturday, for instance, when he was clad in the uniform of the ten-oar, the first boat on the river, of which he pulled stroke. At the tables which then were, and perhaps still are, set out in the open air at Surley, he was what writers of a high order would style the cynosure of neighbouring eyes. He distributed, right royally, scraps of cold fowl, and glasses of champagne to his fags, and the fourth form, who crowded round him. At the fireworks which succeeded, he stood up at the head of his crew, waved his hat, and led the cheering. On these occasions, even the masters recognised his position, albeit not written on the tablets of school precedence. They pointed him out to the fair visitors who thronged the towing path in their open carriages and chariots (I think that Broughams were not as yet invented), and the Newcastle scholar and the best Grecian slunk past quite unnoticed, as much out of place as a poet-laureate at the storming of the Malakoff. It was a great sight, too, to see the captain on duck-and-green-pea night, that is to say, on the alternate Saturdays in the summer half, when the crews of the three upper boats rowed up to Surley, to partake of the delicacies from which the procession received its name. Or to watch him directing the matches and sweepstakes in which, owing to his high position, he was debarred from taking an active part. Lower sixes, the two sides of college, the pulling, and sculling, and double-sculling sweepstakes, and the like. He discharged, if I remember rightly, the actual gun which gave the signal of the start, and which was the only fire-arm which an Eton boy could have let off in public without incurring a flogging. He sometimes ran by the side of the contending parties. He was always in training, and we believed him capable of distancing any professional pedestrian, stag, or fancy boy, whatever, in a run from Windsor all the way to London. Then, when not actually engaged in occupations connected with his own element, there was a grandeur about him which threw all the other notabilities of the school quite into the shade. As he walked across the playing-fields, for instance, he seemed a greater man than the Captain of the Eleven. This, no doubt arose in some measure, from his branch of the service being the more popular of the two, just as, in the affections of Englishmen in general, the navy holds a higher place than the army; but it was also, in a great degree, to be attributed to his stalwart appearance and personal strength, the special objects of admiration in all primitive infant communities; whether of manlike boys, or childlike men; whether in the British or South Sea Islands. It was a pleasure to watch him playing at cricket—almost a pleasure to fag out for him in the field. He was not very scientific, to be sure, but when he did catch a ball—what a swipe! What did it matter, after all, about the stroke being made in the wrong direction, when the ball was spinning like a little speck at the height of a poplar-tree, or wending its course far over the head of the outermost scout till it came to earth in the Fellows' garden.

What I have hitherto said of my hero, relates, of course, principally to the feeling which was entertained respecting him by the lower boys. As we rose in the school, and (a matter that was of more importance to some of us in those days) in the boats, our impression of our captain came necessarily to be modified. No one is quite a hero to those who are in immediate contact with him—or, as the proverb expresses it, to his valet. We found the office filled by one of our own contemporaries, by a youth who had worshipped, and toadied, and fagged for the captain of the boats of five years before; who had passed in regular gradations, and through successive crews, from the Thetis to the Britannia, from the Britannia to the Victory, and so onward to the head place in the ten-oar. If he wore tail-coats, so did we; if he smoked cigars, and felt a little indisposed after them, so, in like manner did we; if he had thrashed a bargee, we, too, had had our not inglorious contests with the denizens of Slough and Salt Hill. Our reverence naturally in some degree diminished; or rather, adhering to the word already employed, I should say that it became modified, depending upon a correcter view of its object. If we had lost the exaggerated notions conceived of him in the days of our fourth-formdom, we had at the same time acquired a juster appreciation of what he really was, of the difficulties which he had overcome, of the influence which he exercised. Just so, the courtiers who surround a king, and who know him to be very little of a hero,—perhaps very much of a drunkard,—may revere him in their own way to quite as great an extent as the peasant who believes that his majesty washes his hands in a golden basin, and goes to sleep in his crown and coronation robes.

During the four years that I trembled under the ferule of Dr. Hawtrey, we had a succession of three captains of the boats. The first, A., will be remembered as having held the office for two successive years. Indeed, he remained at school a twelvemonth longer than he would otherwise have done, on purpose to retain it. Nothing can show more strongly the influence which a high position in the boats conferred among us, than the fact that boys would, in this way, very often seek to defer the period of their entrance at the University, or into the army, and persuade their parents to keep them at school, in order to rise to eminence on the river. A. must have been, at the time of his leaving, very nearly one and twenty, and had quite outgrown the age to which the necessary restrictions of the school were adapted. He

was in the sixth form, and so exempted from liability to the block. His execution which was, nevertheless, at one time talked of, for some great offence, would have attracted a larger concourse of spectators, than had been gathered together on any similar occasion since Dr. Keate flogged the whole of the lower division. I remember his thrashing a refractory cad in the town one day, when Mr. Z., fresh from Cambridge, and appointed one of the junior masters only a few days before, at the age of three and twenty, happened to come past. A comical expression of uncertainty, flitted across little Z.'s features, as he witnessed the scene; he hesitated, with natural timidity, to walk up to the great grenadier. It certainly was hard upon him; it was as though a newly ermined puisne judge were required, the very day of his elevation, to put down the Attorney-General. Z. compromised the matter, by pretending to have seen nothing, and turned aside into a neighbouring shop. A. left Eton, I believe, with more leaving books, or testimonials of regard, than had ever before been given to a boy. He carried away a library of some hundred volumes. It must have been a melancholy moment for him when he last set eyes on the distant spires and antique towers of our foundation. Manhood could hardly have in store for him any such triumphs as those he had left behind. He is now, I think, a highly respected clergyman in the West of England, and, perhaps, has one of his former fags for a rural dean.

He was succeeded by R., who certainly was not the best oar in the school, and furnished one of the few instances of great admirals in our republic who have owed their rise to favouritism. His deficiency was so generally acknowledged that he became a kind of king fainéant—a mayor of the palace, promptly revealing himself in the person of his lieutenant, T., the captain of the Victory. "Boys are so like men!" and British boys are, of course, exactly like British men. No one will be surprised to hear, therefore, that although the real power had fallen into the hands of T., yet it did not permit him to wrest from his superior either the title of captain, or the place at the stroke oar. The feeling of the community would not have tolerated such an usurpation. R. had been regularly chosen and consecrated at the Upper Sixes of the preceding year. To dispute the eligibility of the choice now, might be to bring down the whole fabric of our aquatic greatness with a crash. It had always been the custom, too, that the captain should row at the stroke oar, and, although by persisting in this arrangement, in the present case, it was admitted that the college lost one very important match, we should not have been easily brought to suffer an innovation. It will be seen that routine and red-tapeism are not confined to cabinets, where, indeed, those great Anglo-Saxon institutions only receive their highest developments, and attract attention by operating in a wider field.

What might have happened, even with our well-ordered and conservative spirit, if R. had stayed on another year, it is impossible to conjecture. Our constitution, laws, and customs, whereof the memory of boy ran not to the contrary, would have come to a dead lock, similar to that of 'eighty-eight, or of the period of the Reform Bill. A tempest in some form or other would assuredly have swept over our little slop basin, and the Great Admiral would have stood a great chance of going down in his cockboat. He would have been morally tonsured and put into a convent, like the Merovingians of old. Happily, the case did not arise, and T. started the following March, on the river, as de jure and de facto captain, with one of the finest eights that ever upheld the honour of Eton. He regained our laurels, lost under the reign of his feeble predecessor, and vanquished every opponent. Nor were his exploits confined to the watery element; he and his crew thrashed —or, were popularly supposed to have thrashed, which was the same thing—an equal number of life-guardsmen. Training was in his day carried to a height undreamt of before, and enforced by the strictest edicts of what has since become known as a beneficent despotism. The fasts of the church are not more religiously observed by the Trappist, than was the diet of stale bread, raw meat, bottled porter, and hard-boiled eggs, by the athletes who rowed under the motto of Floreat Etona. The effect of this system upon lads of eighteen certainly was to produce the demise of two of them within a few years, and the permanent enfeeblement of several others; but the chronicler whose business is only with the public deeds of his heroes, must decline to follow them into the seclusion of their private lives, and referring to the example of Achilles, must content himself with remarking that their career, if not long, was glorious, and will be handed down to remote Anglo-Saxondom in the columns of Bell's Life.

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TWO DIFFICULT CASES.

THE FIRST CASE.

On the thirtieth of March in the year sixteen hundred and ninety-nine, four barristers who are concerned in my first case, came, among others, on circuit to the town of Hertford. Two of the four,—Mr. Ellis Stevens, and Mr. William Rogers, arrived together, and took a night's lodging for themselves and for another of the four, Mr. Marson, who would shortly follow them, in the house of a person named Guney. The lodging taken, they, as a matter of course, went about their business for the day.

The fourth barrister was a gentleman of high character and good connections, having some little independent property, and a fair practice at the bar. His name was Spencer Cowper, and for him no lodgings were taken because he had friends at Hertford, with whom he was invited to reside during the assizes; moreover, if he had not accepted their invitation, there was still another lodging in the town, habitually used at assize time either by his brother or himself. Mr. Cowper's friends in Hertford — residents much respected by the townsfolk — were two Quakeresses, a widow, Mrs. Mary Stout, and Sarah Stout, her daughter, who was a pretty, but not healthy girl, possessed of property in her own right. At the house of these friends Mr. Spencer Cowper first drew rein when he reached Hertford (the circuit was then travelled on horseback); after a brief call, he proceeded to the Globe and Dolphin inn, but sent his horse to be put up at Mrs. Stout's; and at the end of the day's business, he himself went to Mrs. Stout's to supper, purposing, as it was understood, to pass the night there.

At six o'clock the next morning, when a miller was about to let a flush of water into his mill-dam, on the Priory river, he was startled by the sight of a woman's sleeve, and something like part of a woman's dress, floating on the surface of the stream. He called his men, and drew out of the water the corpse of a female which had been caught by the right arm between the stakes placed across the mill-dam. The corpse was that of the young Quakeress. Her fair hair, though uncovered by the close cap that she usually wore, scarcely had one of its smooth braids roughened; her grey dress had been removed. Except for some discoloration about neck and breast, she looked as she might have looked when slumbering. This event set the town of Hertford astir, but inquest on the body elicited little information.

No evidence was adduced to show by what accident Sarah Stout could have come to her death. The surgeons examined, gave it as their opinion that the discolorations were no more than the settlings of blood, common in all cases of death by suffocation. The body, it was remarked, was slight as in life, not distended by the water, nor had any water issued from the mouth when it was drawn out of the river. Mr. Cowper, the last person known to have been in the company of the deceased, declared that he had parted from her on the previous night in her own house, and in reply to some questions, he affirmed on oath, that he knew of no distraction or love-fit, that should put deceased on this extravagant action—she was a very modest woman. The jury found that Sarah Stout destroyed herself, being of unsound mind at the time; and so the matter rested for a while.

But, on the twenty-eighth of April, Mary Stout, the mother of the dead girl, not contented with the inquest, caused the body of her daughter to be disinterred for further surgical examination. In consequence of some opinions then formed, and of disclosures made relative to the three friends of Mr. Cowper, Mr. Cowper himself, together with those friends of his, John Marson, Ellis Stevens, and William Rogers, all gentlemen of reputation and good standing, were, on the sixteenth of July following, put upon their trial for the murder of Miss Sarah Stout by strangling. It was alleged that they had strangled her, and afterwards thrown her into the Priory river, to make it appear that she had destroyed herself.

Mr. Jones, king's counsel, opened the case by stating that a friendship of long date had existed between the deceased, the prisoner Cowper, and his wife; that in the week previous to the assizes, the deceased wrote to invite Cowper to stay at her house during assize time, which invitation he accepted in a letter written by his wife. It was said

further, that on arriving at Hertford, Cowper called on the Stouts as before mentioned, directly on entering the town; and returned to dine; and that when asked, on his leaving again, whether he would lie there that night, he replied that he would.

In continuation of the case it was stated that between the hours of nine and ten he supped with Miss Stout and her mother, and then, having requested writing materials, engaged himself upon a letter to his wife. That, at about a quarter to eleven o'clock, Miss Stout rang the bell, and directed the maid-servant to warm the bed for him, and to prepare his chamber. That Mr. Cowper offered no observation or objection on this order being given, and that the servant proceeded to obey it, leaving Mr. Cowper and Miss Stout together: the mother not being then present. That, a few minutes after going up stairs, the servant, Sarah Walker, heard the front door, which always closed with a loud noise, clap to—and, wondering who had gone out, concluded that it was Mr. Cowper, who had gone to the post with the letter she had seen him writing. On her returning to the room shortly after eleven o'clock, to say the bed-chamber was ready, the maid found neither her young mistress nor Mr. Cowper there. She and the mother (the case for the prosecution went on to state), utterly at a loss what to do, or how to account for this strange disappearance, remained sitting up throughout the night, expecting the reappearance of the absent persons, every moment; but hour after hour passed. The young Quakeress was never again seen alive.

The circumstances attending the discovery of the body were next recapitulated; and the king's counsel proposed to produce evidence to show, that from the position in which it was found floating in a depth of some five or six feet of water, and from the state of the body at the time of finding, it was impossible to conclude that she could have been alive when she first plunged into the water. He also dwelt strongly on the facts that Mr. Cowper was the last person seen in her company; that his conduct in leaving the house after it had been so clearly understood he was to sleep there, was extremely singular; and, what was still more remarkable, that he who had been so long on terms of friendship with the family, should, after the catastrophe, never have gone to the house to make any enquiries. Instead of doing that, he sent the ostler of the inn to fetch his horse, and left the town without taking any notice whatever of the matter.

With respect to the other prisoners, it was proved by the Guneys, at whose house they lodged, that Ellis Stevens and William Rogers, who had engaged the lodging in the afternoon of the thirteenth of March, returned to it at eleven o'clock: the other prisoner, John Marson, being with them. That they desired to have a fire lighted in their apartment, and that while Guney's sister was lighting it, she and Mistress Guney going backwards and forwards to the room, overheard the conversation of the prisoners, which related altogether to Miss Sarah Stout.

They also observed that on Marson's removing his peruke, his head reeked, and that his face was hot and flushed. They noticed, too, that his boots were wet and muddy. One of the others said to him, speaking of Miss Stout, "She was an old sweetheart of yours?" to which he replied, "That she had turned him off, but that a friend of his was even with her." According to the testimony of the same witnesses, Marson said further, "Her business is settled;" and, laying down a small bundle on the bed, he exclaimed, "Mistress Stout's courting days are over."

They talked, too, of money; and one of them remarked that Marson's share was forty or fifty pounds: upon which he pulled out a handful of gold and silver, and vowed he would spend it all for joy because the business was finished. That they then ordered wine, and invited the landlord, John Guney, to drink with them; and that, while so doing, their principal conversation was about Miss Stout, concerning whom they made several inquiries. Finally, it was deposed, that after their departure the next morning, Mistress Guney picked up from the foot of the bed a piece of rope, which she could not account for, and believed must have been left by the prisoners. It was proved also that during Tuesday the three last-named prisoners were observed by many persons, at various times, in close and earnest conversation with the accused man Cowper.

All these statements were fully proved by different witnesses. Sarah Walker, on cross-examination, most emphatically adhered to her evidence, that Cowper said at dinner-time, "He would lie there that night;" and, in reply to a question of the prisoner's, "Whether her mistress was not melancholy at times?" acknowledged that she was, imputing it to a long illness she had had.

Mistress Guney, on her cross-examination, in answer to a question as to why she had not come forward on the inquest with the evidence now offered, confessed that she had wished to do so, but her husband had overruled her, fearing it might bring them into trouble. However, the matter had been since then so much on her mind as to hinder her from resting night or day.

A main point in the case was, of course, to establish the fact that a murder had been committed; for this purpose the surgeon was produced who had, with difficulty, been induced by Mrs. Mary Stout, the deceased's mother, to re-examine the remains of her child, with the view to clear her character from certain aspersions that had been cast upon it, by way of discovering a motive for the assumed act of self-destruction. He

deposed that the places in which the discoloration had been observed in the first instance were, at the time of the second examination, greatly decomposed, but that the rest of the body was, on the contrary, in a quite sound and healthy state. He further stated that there was no apparent ground whatever for the imputations cast on the girl's character. Upon his cross-examination, this gentleman admitted that he had not observed on the first inspection of the body any crease or mark, as of a rope, about the neck, or any appearance as of strangulation. But, upon this part of the case the opinions of a number of medical gentlemen were taken, who all decidedly expressed their conviction that the deceased had not come to her death by drowning. The sound state of her person, with the exception of those parts which had the appearance of having been injured by violence, proved, they said, that she had imbibed no water, which would speedily have caused decomposition; but she must have imbibed water if she had gone into it alive. A drowned person, it was argued, sank, whereas a dead body floated. In proof of this, Edward Clement, a seaman, was called, who deposed that he was present at the sea fight of sixteen hundred and ninety, off Beachy Head, and that all the dead bodies which were thrown overboard during the fight, floated: that he saw hundreds so floating at that fight. He deposed further that in sixteen hundred and ninety-one, he witnessed the shipwreck of the Coronation. The crew were walking on the larboard side of the ship when she sank, after which they swam about like shoals of fish, hovered one above the other, and finally disappeared: sinking downright as soon as life was extinct.

Another seaman deposed, that when they buried any deceased persons at sea, weights were fixed to the bodies, because otherwise they would not sink, but would float.

So far there was a strong case, at least, for the presumption of foul play; but there appeared to be a great defect in one very material part of the case—namely, in evidence as to the general character and conduct of the deceased during life, which might show whether or not she was likely from her past conduct to have committed any error which might possibly induce an act of self-destruction. No near friend or relative could be examined—all her relations and connections, even her mother, being Quakers, steadily declined to take an oath, and were for that reason, according to the state of the law in those days, not admissible as witnesses.

On the other hand, the traversers produced a number of witnesses, casual acquaintances of the deceased, who were all witness to her melancholy disposition. To a draper from whom she purchased a dress, she remarked that she did not think she should live ever to wear it; and when he taxed her jestingly with being in love, she did not deny that, but declared it never should be said of her that she changed her religion for a husband. It was further proved that she had been ill for some time previously, and that upon a lady's advising her to consult an eminent physician, she said it would be useless, because her disease was in her mind. It was proved also that she had been very careless of herself throughout this illness, and was heard to say, openly, the sooner it put an end to her the better.

These, and other like facts, were produced in evidence on the part of the traversers, to show on the part of the deceased predisposition towards suicide; and—for the reason before given—there was no evidence on the part of the prosecution, by those who might be supposed able to disprove it.

Spencer Cowper himself conducted the defence of himself and his friends in a most able manner; minutely sifting all the evidence, and deadening every point made for the prosecution. On his own behalf he appealed to the bench and the jury to consider, "whether, under the circumstance in which he was accused, he, a man of some fortune in possession, in expectation of a better, in good professional practice, living within his income, never in debt,—in fact, he might truly say, never owing five pound at any time for the last eight years,—having no possibility of reaping any advantage by the death of the deceased; having no malice towards her, or such would have been proved; but, on the contrary, as appeared from the evidence for the prosecution, in perfect amity and friendship with her up to the day of her death; was likely to be guilty of her murder? He submitted that he, having a fair character and a stake in society, should all at once abandon such a position for no assignable cause or motive, and begin at the beginning of all baseness and wickedness, was incredible.

Doctors Sloane and Wollaston, two of the most eminent physicians of the day, and Cooper the anatomist, were examined on behalf of the traversers, and were all of opinion that so small a quantity of water might cause death as to leave little or no trace of it discernible. Mr. Herriot, a sea surgeon, declared, from his experience, that dead bodies would sink on being thrown into the sea. Another seaman deposed to his having seen dead bodies float. Cowper, ably contending that there was no proof whatever that a murder had been perpetrated, urged also, that even as regarded the floating of the body of the deceased gentlewoman, it appeared by the evidence for the prosecution that the body of Miss Stout was raised and supported by the stakes in the dam, as any other body or substance would have been, by the force of the current on meeting an impediment in its course. According to Sarah Walker's evidence, she heard the street door close shortly before eleven o'clock, at which

time he must have left the house, as several witnesses were produced to prove that, precisely as the clock struck eleven, he entered the Globe and Dolphin inn, where he remained for a quarter of an hour, and then proceeded to his lodgings at a Mr. Barefoot's, and was in bed before twelve o'clock. He explained why he did not remain at Mistress Stout's: His brother, Mr. William Cowper, who usually also went that circuit, always kept engaged at Mr. Barefoot's, rooms which the traverser was in the habit of sharing. On the occasion in question, his brother William happening to have no business at Hertford, was not going there. He himself having met his brother on the previous Friday, told him of his own design to stop at Mrs. Stout's, and begged William, for that reason, to write word to Mr. Barefoot that he might let the lodgings if he could. This, William Cowper had said he would do; but Spencer, after having called at Mistress Stout's on his coming into Hertford, went forward directly to Mr. Barefoot's to ask whether the lodgings had been let, and then found that no letter had been written. The rooms, consequently, were retained for him: which being the case, he considered himself bound to pay for them, and thought it best to occupy them rather than occasion Mrs. Stout any needless trouble.

Mr. and Mrs. Barefoot, their maid-servant, and a gentleman who happened to be present, by their evidence assured these facts. Spencer admitted he might have said, on leaving Mrs. Stout's house, after dinner, that he would return again that evening, as in fact he did return to supper; but he positively denied having said that he would sleep there, for the reasons stated.

On the part of the other three traversers, the object of their visit to Hertford was satisfactorily explained. It was proved that there was law business in which they were engaged. It was testified by some friends of theirs that they had been at the Globe and Dolphin from eight o'clock in the evening until eleven, when they were escorted by their friends to Guney's, and left there at the door of their lodging at the time when they themselves stated that they had returned to bed. It was strongly denied, on the part of Marson, that he made use of the expression, "Mistress Stout's courting days are over;" but, it was admitted that they all had merry and careless conversation on the subject of the gentlewoman. It was proved by two or three witnesses that the three traversers and several other gentlemen of Clifford's Inn had met on Sunday, the twelfth, at the Old Devil's Inn, when the conversation turned on Stevens and Rogers having to attend the Lord Chief Justice out of town; and upon a certain Mr. Marshall, who had courted Mistress Stout of Hertford; whereupon, one of the company had said, "If you go there, pray ask after Marshall's mistress, and bring us some account of her." Either Marson or Stevens thereto replied he would "do his best and enquire all about the gentlewoman."

Mr. Spencer Cowper then reverted to his own particular case, expressing himself as being most thankful to his enemies, that in their endeavours to clear the character of Mistress Sarah Stout, they had done the same for him. But, to convince the jury she had murdered herself, he was obliged to reject this benefit for himself, so far as it went, and (though most unwillingly) to trespass on the character of the deceased gentlewoman, not on his own account alone, but in defence of the lives of the other three traversers.

Then, as to the admission of Sarah Walker, on her cross-examination, "That the deceased had been of a melancholy and desponding state of mind for some time previous to her death," he proceeded to show why she was so, and thence to deduce the natural consequence—suicide.

He then went on to state, that three or four years previously he had introduced Mr. Marshall (the gentleman before alluded to) to Mistres Stout, and that from her manner and apparent reception of that gentleman's attentions, he had every reason to think she was favouring them, with a view to marriage. But one evening, when the three were out walking in company with another lady, and he, Mr. Cowper, was apart with Mistress Stout, while Marshall and the other lady were before them, Miss Stout suddenly observed to him, "She did not imagine he had been so dull." That he, being curious to know to what she alluded, she replied, "in fancying that she intended to accept Mr. Marshall's addresses." That he thereupon asked her, if such was not her intention, why she encouraged his attentions; to which she replied, she did it to divert the observation of the world, and to cover their own intimacy; in corroboration of which statement he produced Mr. Marshall, who stated that on being introduced by Mr. Cowper to Miss Stout, she had afforded him many opportunities of improving his acquaintance with her, and evidently favoured his attentions; but at length, upon his pressing his suit, she gave him a decided refusal, without any seeming reason.

Mr. Cowper then proceeded to read the letters which, he stated, he had received from Miss Stout, at the same time declaring that nothing but the duty he felt he owed to the other traversers would ever have induced him to give them publicity.

They were two letters, which, if genuine, were fatal to the character of the deceased. The last of them, Mr. William Cowper declared that his brother had shown to him at the time when he requested him to write to the Barefoots to let the lodgings, and he afterwards having reflected that, considering the state of affairs, it would be better

for his brother not to lodge at Mistress Stout's, neglected purposely to send the message.

It does not appear, however, that any proof of the handwriting of Miss Stout was offered, or that the letters bore her signature; and it would appear strange at this day, that counsel on the other side should permit such letters, or indeed any letters, to be read without having the handwriting first proved. Nevertheless, Mr. Spencer Cowper proceeded to comment on these documents, and to observe to the court and the jury that they could easily understand, from their contents, the reason why, while Sarah Walker was in the room, he did not deny his intention of sleeping at the house; for, he did not deem it expedient that she should be present during any controversy that might ensue between himself and Mistress Stout upon the subject. On the maid's departure, he said, he had argued with the young lady on the scandal that might possibly arise, and stated his determination to lodge at the Barefoots'. She did not admit his arguments, and he ended by abruptly leaving the house. Mr. Spencer Cowper then called Sir William Ashurst, Sir Thomas Lane, and other gentlemen of note, to testify to his character and reputation. All of them bore witness to his credit in that regard; and two of them, who had walked over the ground between Mistress Stout's residence and the nearest point at which she could have been thrown into the river, proved that it took them half-an-hour of walking at their ordinary pace to do it.

At this stage of the business, the jury began to exhibit great impatience, and one of them suggested that they might withdraw; but the judge (Mr. Justice Hatsell), who, at an early stage of the case, had seemed rather impatient also, and had frequently interrupted Mr. Cowper, when he commented on his evidence, begging of him not to flourish too much, but stick to his case, and let the evidence speak for itself; told the jury they must make an end first.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Mr. Jones, counsel for the prosecution, confined himself to the remark that, as regarded the character of the deceased, no evidence had been produced save these letters, which, after all, bore no signatures, and could not be weighed against the good opinion entertained of her by all the townspeople. To which the judge replied, no one disputed that she might have been a young woman of good character, and yet her brain might have been turned by her passion, or by some distemper.

Of this very remarkable trial perhaps the strongest peculiarity is the judge's charge or summing-up, in which he renders the case, if possible, more complicated and perplexing, by his care to transfer every atom of responsibility from himself to the jury, and to afford no beacon of law to guide them through the maze.

He commenced by observing that the indictment against the prisoners at the bar, was for a very great offence—for murder—one of the highest offences in the eye of the law. He then proceeded to sum up the evidence, and on the conflicting testimony relative to the sinking or swimming of dead bodies, he declared he could find no certainty in it, one way or the other, and as regarded the fact of there being no water in the body of the deceased, and the question as to whether the bodies of drowned persons would necessarily contain water, he observed, that the doctors and surgeons talked a great deal, but that, unless they (the jury) had more skill in anatomy than he had, they would not have been much edified by what they had been told; all he could say was, that the doctors differed. Observing on the imputation that the deceased had committed suicide, the judge confessed he was at a loss to conceive why a gentlewoman like the deceased should have been led to commit such an act, and on the subject of the letters purporting to have been written by her, to Mr. Spencer Cowper, he observed, "It might have been a love-distraction, and yet she might have been a virtuous woman, for it might have been a distemper that came upon her and turned her brain, and discomposed her mind, and then no wonder at her writing in a manner different from the rest of the actions of her life;" and he concluded on this part of the case by saying:

"Gentlemen, you are to consider and weigh the evidence. I will not trouble you any more about that matter."

He then proceeded on the case of the other three prisoners; and, as regarded their conversation at their lodgings, left it entirely to the jury, merely observing that their expressions were very strange, and they (the jury) were to decide whether they were spoken in jest, as it was pretended, or in earnest. There had been a piece of cord and a bundle found in the room they occupied, after the departure of the three gentlemen next morning; but he knew not what to make of it. "Truly," he observed, "these three men, by their talk, had given great cause for suspicion; but whether they were guilty or not, or in any way accessory to the death of the gentlewoman, they (the jury) were to determine." He then dismissed the jury to consider their verdict, saying, he was sensible he had omitted many things, but that he was a little faint, and could not repeat any more of the evidence.

Half-an-hour sufficed for the jury to decide upon their verdict, which acquitted all the prisoners.

The story is not yet quite at an end. The mother of the deceased Quakeress, strong in the conviction of the prisoner's guilt, and burning with indignation at the second

wrong done to her daughter, determined to prosecute the matter to the utmost limits of the law.

Under some old statute, then existing, although seldom resorted to, a writ of appeal lay against a verdict even in a criminal case, if it was applied for in the name of the heir-at-law of the deceased, within a year and a day after the period of the first trial. There was some difficulty in this instance in ascertaining who was heir-at-law, and the required person at last was found in a boy ten years old, named Henry Stout.

The very day after the mother had succeeded in establishing the pedigree of this child, she sued for the writ, which was at once granted, and on the thirteenth day of April seventeen hundred, she caused herself to be constituted guardian of the appellant, with the view to prosecuting the appeal.

It appears that the writ was then duly delivered to the under-sheriff of the county of Hertford, but that this officer neglected to make any return on it, and it was not until after several rules from the Court of King's Bench were obtained and served on him, that he paid any apparent heed to its existence. Finally, and, in fact, after the term prescribed by the statute had expired, he made an affidavit to show cause why he had not returned the writ as required to the effect, "that, on the sixteenth of April, he had placed the writ in the hand of the infant."

Upon the hearing of this affidavit in the King's Bench, the court ordered the under-sheriff to be examined upon interrogatories, when he declared that the appellant, with his mother and other relatives, came to him and delivered him a note from Mr. William Cowper, telling him that the infant was the plaintiff in the appeal, and that one of the women was his mother: whereupon he, not knowing of any other guardian to the infant, delivered the writ into his hands, at the request of the mother, and when afterwards he desired that it should be returned, he was told that the infant, with advice, had burnt it. Upon this the court mulcted the under-sheriff in the penalty of two hundred marks.

It seems, however, that the family and connections of Spencer Cowper, the supposed principal in the murder, had been active in endeavours to defeat the course of justice in this new turn of the case; for, it transpired that the deliuquent under-sheriff had been in close communication with the Cowpers, and that William Cowper had first written to him to ask whether a writ of appeal had been delivered to him, against his brother Spencer, upon which he had sent William a copy of the writ, who, thus prepared, had tampered with the friends of the infant who was legally appellant, and induced them to act in the way already stated.

Mrs. Stout, the mother of the deceased, in vain petitioned the Lord Keeper, and even presented a statement of her case to several of the members at the door of the House of Commons. She was at every point baffled in the courts of law; but, both parties, in printed papers, appealed to the world in support of their respective cases.

The friends of Spencer Cowper alleged that the prosecution and trial were brought forward by the sect to which the deceased belonged. They said that, as the Quakers recoiled against the stigma of suicide attaching to any one of their body, professing, as they did, to have the Light from above, to guide them unerringly through life, this stigma they were willing to wash away, even in the blood of four innocent men. The attempt to procure a second trial they thus represented as the mere effort of malice and revenge.

On the other hand, Mistress Stout replied, it was not to be supposed that a mother whose only child had been first cruelly murdered, and then yet more cruelly defamed, should require the instigation of any sect to urge the punishment of her child's murderers and slanderers.

She utterly denied the authenticity of the letters produced as her daughter's; and alleged, that so far from having contemplated suicide, or having any undue intimacy with Mr. Spencer Cowper, she had urgently requested a young gentlewoman of her acquaintance, who had called upon her the very day of the catastrophe, to remain in the house and sleep with her that night; and, upon her declining to do so, on the plea of a previous engagement, had engaged this friend to dine with her the next day, playfully arranging what they should have to eat.

A most important part of the subsequent revelation was, the fact that a sum of a thousand pounds belonging to the deceased, which she had declared her purpose of entrusting to Mr. Spencer Cowper for investment in the purchase of a separate life-interest for herself in the event of her marriage, was nowhere to be traced, although it was known to have been in her possession a short time before her death. It was therefore broadly insinuated, that there might be found a motive to induce Mr. Cowper to contrive her death, if, having received the money for this purpose, he appropriated it to his own use.

In reply to this charge, Mr. Cowper's friends and advocates said here was only hearsay and surmise, defying proof.

Cowper himself does not seem to have suffered much by the trials, as regards professional advancement. He became Chief Justice of the County Palatine of Chester, and a Judge of the Common Pleas, which posts he held until his death, in the reign of George the Second; few lawyers of his day attaining higher reputation, than he

enjoyed (supposing him to have been an innocent man able to enjoy it) for the space of thirty years.

THE PURPLE SHORE.

I HAVE rarely gone upon the beach with a country cousin who did not take up a handful of dry sea-weeds, and ask me what the white serpentine things were, which he saw upon it. Wrack-spangle, the popular name of these things, implies that they deck the sea-weeds as spangles adorn robes. The savans call them Serpulæ, from the Latin word serpo, I creep. Mollusks and worms living in pipes are called tubicolæ, or tube-dwellers. The serpulæ live in as fantastically twisted pipes as ever any man smoked. Everything in the sea is more or less covered with these people of the pipes,—shells, crabs, weeds, timber, everything in short; and when bottles have been thrown overboard from ships, they have often been washed ashore, gorgeously and fantastically decorated with sculpture-like festoons of them. Glassy or milky, round or angular, smooth, wrinkled or spiral, prostrate or erect, social or solitary, there are great varieties of these pipe-worms, differing in size as in form, from the tiniest spangle of the wrack, to the serpulæ found in the coral reefs of the tropics which are sometimes three feet long. The body of the animal is cylindrical, tapering smaller as it recedes from the head.

The first segment of the body is surrounded with a collar which appears to secrete the tube, as the mantle secretes the shell of the mollusks. The crystallised portion of the tubes being more prominent than the organic, the tubes of the worms have more of a mineral, and somewhat less of an animal nature, than the shells of the conchylions. These worms breathe by fan-like gill-tufts issuing from their heads. The gill-tufts of these annelidæ, or ring-like animals, are always bizarre in their appearance, and display sometimes beautiful colours. The pipe-worms are usually seen with a lid or stopper closing the mouth of their tubes. When some of the species lift up the lid or opercule, gill-tufts are seen as beautiful as living flowers of orange, violet, or carmine hues. A pipe-worm lifting up his opercule, and displaying his gills, is like a tuft of petals coming out into full blow and brilliance.

The sand-shell is nearly as well known as the wrack-spangle. Every child knows it who has ever played with the wrack and sand at high-water mark. I made my first acquaintance with it when determinedly building castles of sand, which were to be stout enough to defy the German Ocean. I am now cured of my belief in all such castles. When the sand castles withstood the waves, the children applauded the castles, and when the waves destroyed the castles three tremendous cheers were given to the waves; but of course grown-up folks never do the like. The sand-shells of Sabella, Terebella, and Amphitrite, consist of fine sand glued together, and forming tubes resembling the bits of paper which are twisted round to make squills, or form cigarettes. Sabella secretes, the anatomists are not sure where, the glue which cements together the silicious and shelly sand of the funnels. When found upon the shore a touch suffices to destroy them. Sabella—as the common worm of the sand, or sable, is prettily called—lives in these narrow funnels near low-water mark. Sabella, like serpula, belongs to the sub-order of the Head-gills. In sabella, the spiral tentacles serve both to take in the aliment, and to renew the water which supplies the gills with oxygen. Sir John Dalyel said he had observed the reproduction of the sabella by scission, as among the planaria. Several Head-gills, serpula, terebella, and protula, for example, fix their eggs in clusters upon stones near their funnels.

Children playing with the sand, find cowry shells as frequently as sand-funnels. These pretty little univalve shells are called cowries because this is their name in India, where they are used as money. The French call them the porcelain sea-fleas, les porcelaines poux de mer. The porcelain polish is due to the mantle issuing from the shell, and covering the whole of it. The porcelain cowries crawl like snails, displaying upon their mantles, and upon their heads, a rich variety of colours. They have long tongues covered with tentacles. The cowry, like the sabella, dwells in the vicinity of low-water mark. Cyprea, the learned name of this creature, is, I suppose, derived from mythology, and bestowed in compliment of the beauty of this pretty conchylion. The manufacture of the porcelain shells of the cyprea is as curious as the shells themselves are beautiful. At first the shell consists of a simple and smooth twist round the imaginary axis of the central column, while the lips are thin, and the colour disposed in bands or waves. As the shell solidifies, teeth appear, and the back is painted with a coat of colours in obscure bands, or waves. Finally, as the teeth strengthen, the sides are thickened with a colouring enamel arranged in lines, blotches, nets, and waves, of various hues and patterns.

Lieutenant J. B. Hankey, of the Collingwood, observed a cowry while renewing its shell. His observation needs confirmation to convince the gainsayer; which I hope it will obtain speedily. The formation of the shell is a work of time; the renewal of it, the gallant Lieutenant says, is only an affair of a few days. He observed a cowry retire into a nook, as if it were intent on something. The animal was too big for its shell. The process of the first formation of the shell was reversed. The colours became

obscure, and the shell thin; when it was split along the back by the animal, and disappeared. Gradually the calcifying processes of the mantle formed a new and larger shell, which it covered with a fresher enamel and touched with surpassing beauty.

Serpula, sabella, and cyprea lead us down the beach. The waves strew the high-tide line with their remains, while their lives were passed beneath the line of low tide. As we descend the beach of chalk rocks, the colours which meet the eyes change visibly from green, through brown and purple, to red. When the low-water mark is only the limit of an ordinary tide, a glimpse is obtained (but rarely) of the red shore. When, however, the neap tides of spring or autumn lay the upper edge of it bare, a glimpse of it may sometimes be caught, and the glimpse will never be forgotten.

Dulse and Irish moss, common and well-known plants, indicate the whereabout of the purple shore. Dulse is generally found in the transition region between the brown and purple zones. Dulse is called Iridea edulis, because it is eatable, and because some species of it reflect light prismatically, like the iris. Coast-folks on the south-west of England, the west of Ireland, and the east of Scotland, eat dulse. The colour is dark brown purple. When at all reddish they are not good to eat. The blade is flat and expanded, and more fleshy than gelatinous, being composed of densely interwoven fibres running lengthwise. The shape of the blade is egg-like, tapering into a short stem towards the base. The root is a spread disk, from which spring several blades.

The writers on sea-plants say the fronds of Iridea edulis are occasionally eaten by the poor, either raw or fried. Stackhouse says, the fishermen of the south-west of England eat it after they have pinched it between red-hot irons, when it is said to taste like roasted oysters. Dulse is a regular relish on the tables of all ranks in Aberdeen, my native town. When I was a boy, from half-a-dozen to a dozen dulse-wives, according to the season, used to sit every morning on the paving stones of the Castlegate selling dulse. When I think of them, the beautiful granite city, seated at the mouth of the Dee, comes before me like a picture. The Castlegate—a large, oblong square formed of granite houses of all ages and all styles—was a wonderful old place in those days, ere the nineteenth century had eclipsed the middle ages in the city of Bon Accord.

Recollections crowd upon me when I ought to be thinking only of the dulse-wives. I see shore-porters dressed in blue cloth, with broad Scottish bonnets and broader shoulders; carters standing upright in their carts, while driving them, and looking ruddy and sleepy; recruiting sergeants of the Highland regiments beguiling the country lads; and ladies, followed by their maids, making purchases of fish. However, of all the figures on the Castlegate, none were more picturesque than the dulse-wives. They sat in a row on little wooden stools, with their wicker creels placed before them on the granite paving stones. Dressed in clean white mutches, or caps, with silk-handkerchiefs spread over their breasts, and blue stuff wrappers and petticoats, the ruddy and sonsie dulse-women looked the types of health and strength. Every dulse-wife had a clean white cloth spread half over the mouth of her creel at the side furthest from her, and nearest her customers. The cloth served as a counter on which the dulse was heaped into the handkerchiefs of the purchasers. Many a time, when my whole weekly income was a halfpenny, a Friday's bawbee, I have expended it on dulse, in preference to apples, pears, blackberries, cranberries, strawberries, wild peas, and sugar-sticks. When I approached, there used to be quite a competition among the dulse-wives for my bawbee. The young ones looked most winning, and the old ones cracked the best jokes. A young one would say:

"Come to me, bonnie laddie, and I'll gie ye mair for yer bawbee than any o' them."

An old one would say:

"Come to me, laddie, an I'll tell what like yer wife will be."

"Ye dinna ken yerself."

"Hoot aye—I ken brawly: she'll hae a head and feet, an mou', and eyen, and may be a nose, and will be as auld as me, if she lives as lang."

"Aye; but ye gie me very little dulse for my bawbee."

"Aye," replies the honest woman, adding another handful, "but sic a wife is weel worth mair siller."

The dulse-wives exploded into laughter, when the old woman suggested some one like herself, as the ideal wife which youth is doomed always to pursue and never to attain. As the boy retired laughing, but abashed, the young one would cry:—

"Y'll come to me neist time, laddie—winna ye?"

Dulse is generally eaten raw in Aberdeen. Raw or toasted with hot irons, or fried, but especially raw, it seasons oaten or wheaten bread admirably. The iodine it contains makes it an excellent vermifuge. Pepper-dulse—Laurencia pinnatifida—is much more rare and more piquant than Iridea edulis. At Aberdeen every dulse-wife has ordinarily a few handfuls of pepper-dulse, half-a-dozen plants of which she adds when asked, to every halfpenny worth of dulse. Sometimes there is one who, being weakly, has nothing but pepper-dulse, which is less heavy to carry, and more costly than the common breakfast relish of the Aberdonians.

"Wha'll buy dulse and tang!" is one of the cries of the fish-wives in the streets of Edinburgh. "He who eats the dulse of Guerdie and drinks of the wells of Kildingie,"

say the people of Stronza, "will escape all maladies except black death." The Norwegians call dulse sou-soell or sheep's weed, because their sheep often stay eating it in their fondness for it until they are drowned by the returning tide. The Icelanders preserve dulse by washing it well in fresh water, by drying it in the sun until it gives out a sweet powdery substance which covers the whole plant, and by packing it into casks and keeping it from the air. Preserved dulse is eaten in this state with fish and butter, or is boiled in milk and mixed with a little flour of rye. The white powdery substance which it gives out, is mannite—the principle of manna.

The common plants which appear best to identify the purple zone are the two well-known gristly weeds sold as Irish moss, which are eaten by the wise in the shape of jellies and blancmanges. The colour of both is purple. The Irish moss of the shops, or carrageen of the Irish, is called by the savans Chondrus crispus or the curly gristle. The blade is variable in breadth,—gristly, branching doubly, flat or curly, with wedgelike segments, and tops that seem to be broken off.

A gristly plant popularly confounded with the curly gristle, is called, by the learned, Gigartina mamillosa. Ladies who have studied these plants with culinary views, prefer the Gigartina mamillosa to the Chondrus crispus. The plants are both chondri or cartilages, or gristles—these three words mean but one thing—only the latter have tubercles like grape-stones scattered over the disk of the blade, and are therefore called the gigartina or the grape-stones. The grape-stone gristle, which is excellent to eat, is distinguished by having the grape-like tubercles supported on little stalks, or mamillosa. The mamal gristle has a thick, fan-like, channelled and irregularly branching frond, with oblong and wedge-shaped segments. It is often found rolled up like a ball. The substance is tough, and when the fruit does not ripen, the tubercles become leaflets. The druggists sell both plants, confounded together, at prices varying from a shilling to four shillings the pound. I never regret my money whatever price I pay for it. After having been pretty well knocked about in the world, and after having dined at many of the different sorts of tables spread in it, I declare I fancy I have never eaten better food than the gristly seaweeds. However, after every storm, hundreds of cart-loads of it are carted away to manure the fields.

I am not alone in my partiality for Irish moss. There was a time when it was a fashionable dish; and it is still, everywhere in France and Great Britain, more or less prescribed as food for invalids. The poor of Brighton use it instead of arrowroot. The curly and mamal gristles are bleached like linen and cotton, and when dry will keep for years. An amiable and interesting writer—the late Dr. Landsborough—gives a recipe for cooking it, which is found to be excellent from experience. "When used, a tea-cup full of it is boiled in water; this water, being strained, is boiled with milk and sugar, and seasoning, such as nutmeg, cinnamon, or essence of lemon. It is then put into a shape in which it consolidates like blancmange, and when eaten with cream it is so good that many a sweet-lipped little boy or girl would almost wish to be on the invalid list to get a share of it."

Many purple plants mark the purple zone. I pass, however, from them, after mentioning the most common and the most useful, to the fixed animals which are its zoological characteristics. Country cousins, on first visiting low-water mark, require to be cautioned against the mania of discoveries. They risk the fate of the provincial editor, who, after a first visit to the British capital, wrote in such terms of the wonders he had seen, that he was known ever after as "the discoverer of London." A pamphlet has reached my hands while writing, published by a M. Caillaud, who has discovered the perforating sea-urchins! Although these animals have been shown in Paris ever since the days of Lamarck, and his pamphlet says nothing which is not to be found in common English books, he is irate with the Academy of Sciences for doubting his priority.

The rock-pools of the purple shore contain living star-fishes. The thorn-skins or echinodermata belong to deeper water and a more brilliant shore, but the tide sometimes abandons them on banks and in crevices which they cannot leave fast enough to escape the examination of the curious observer. A five-fingered star-fish, walking by means of the four rows of suckers which line each of his fingers, is a personage not to be seen, for the first time, without surprise. He cocks up the finger he is not using, and keeps a sharp look out behind with the red eyes in it while advancing with the four other fingers by a mode of locomotion which is his own, and peculiar and original. I try, in vain, to imitate it with my five fingers. Every finger sprawls, and all the four fingers sprawl; and the red eye of every finger stares, and the red eyes of all the four fingers stare; and, indeed, the locomotion of each and all of them is made up of a step and a stare, and a stare and a step, while the cocked-up thumb stares—crab-like—fiercely behind. The rows of suckers in every finger are on the alert, and every sucker is as sensitive and active as if solely responsible for the safety of the whole, and there were not five times four rows of them. Every finger becomes at will as narrow as a little finger, or as broad as a thumb. The spiny cross-fish which I am describing, have a choice of roads as surprising as their means of locomotion. The edge of a ledge, the face of a rock, a shelving bank, a rugged crevice, a channel all

cracks and corners, or the roots of seaweeds seem equally indifferent to the moving fingers and the staring eyes. Every red eye is protected by a pile of spines; and a circle of spines forms a similar palisade around the mouth. The sun-star is rarely left by the tide, but the rosy five-fingered and the spring cross-fish are exposed dry by almost every tide. I have obtained sun-stars, sometimes with twelve and sometimes with thirteen fingers. The eye-palisade of the sun-star is a circle of spines which lap over the eye like the fingers of a hand; and around the mouth there bristle two comb-like semicircles of spines.

A fixed animal which may be taken as a mark of the purple shore, is the purple-tipped sea-urchin, which perforates chalk, limestone, gneiss, and sandstone rocks. The sea-urchins, sea-eggs, or sea-hedgehogs, are called Echinida by the savans, and their word is just the Greek one for hedgehogs. The sea-hedgehogs are round balls of prickles. The starry thorn-skins have an internal skeleton of moveable pieces, with a skinny envelope, sometimes chalky, and sometimes leathery, while the body is radiated, and the digestive canal symmetrical. The sea-hedgehogs are different, their chalky skeleton forming a box, sometimes like a sphere, and sometimes like a disk, while their digestive canal is not symmetrical. The thorn-balls of the sea perforate lodgings for themselves in the rocks. How they do it, is a question, in answer to which the present state of science furnishes us with nothing better than conjectures. Several years ago, the British Association collected a number of sea-hedgehogs in blocks of limestone, and duly supplied them with sea-water, in the hope of surprising their secret, and witnessing their perforations. Expectation was a tip-toe, and discussion was rife, and the savans watched diligently; but the obstinate little prickly-balls all died, and gave no sign. Professor Valenciennes has said justly, that nothing but mechanical perforations have as yet been known in zoology. The teeth and spines, no doubt, act mechanically in boring the holes; but, while agreed as to the fact, the difficulty of science is to know how it is done. Hundreds of urchins are found together in colonies, each in his rock hole; and tiny little ones, the size of peas, in small holes in the partitions, between the lodgings of the big ones. M. Valentin says, the gills of the echinoides, consisting of five hollow lobules ramified like little trees, are external, and situated upon the soft membrane of the mouth. It is difficult to see how, with such a structure, the teeth could be used as the chief instruments for the excavation of the hole. Physiological discussions only add to the interest inspired by the sea-urchins. However, whatever the differences of opinion may be which divide naturalists respecting the physiology of the sea-side thorn-balls, there are none respecting the prettiness and singularity of the appearance of colonies of hundreds of them, when their purple-tipped spines are seen under a thin layer of limpid water in their shallow lodges on the purple shore.

There grows upon the purple shore, a stony plant which is called many-shaped polymorpha, and Melobesia, after one of the sea-nymphs of Hesiod. Melobesia is a purple plant. The frond is round, attached or free, indented or deeply cut, cylindrical and branched, and coated with chalk, and the clumsy branches are often merely rudimentary. It may be said aside that the description is scarcely flattering for a sea-nymph attached to the rocks of quiet bays. Melobesia nestles in her bosom an interesting conchylion, and, but for this circumstance, I should not notice the nymph, although aware that she made an excellent cement to build the Cathedral of Icolmkill. The many-shaped chalk-plant is selected for the nest of a bivalve shell called Lima tenera, the mooring-haven shell. The animal is thin, oblong, with a little foot bearing a byssus, and with a thick-fringed lip around the mouth, and rows of tentacular threads around the edge of the mantle. The shell is oval and thin, the hinge is without teeth, the valves are nearly equal, and the superior edge is straight and longitudinal, while the valves gape in front to let out the byssus. Lima is white, little, and elegant. The haven-shell forms her little nest in the many-shaped chalk-plant by binding the clumsy branches together with a cord, by filling up the spaces, and smoothing the rough places with fine slime; finally, by lining the inside with a tapestry of silky threads. Few shells are more common, insignificant, and uninteresting than the little white haven-shell when the instincts of the animal are unknown; none more interesting when it is known that the creature whose milk-white shell is less than an inch long, and only about half an inch broad, was at once a mason, a plasterer, a rope-spinner, and a tapestry-weaver.

The number of the pages of my manuscript tells me I have already used up my share of space, without entering upon the red zone, and without mentioning a twentieth of the animals included in my notes. I shall hope, by-and-by, to write out a few observations upon the Red Shore—a wondrous theme for volumes. Prior to leaving the purple shore, I may mention a couple of curious observations, for which I am indebted to M. Milne-Edwards. He observed in certain minute shell-fish, which have been separated from the periwinkles because their mouths are oval, and not round, the ambling trot of horses characteristic of the Australian species. The Hood (Calyptra), a tiny yellow limpet, was detected by him upon loose shells of Venus, hatching the young of her egg-cluster under her foot.

A few words to express more adequately

my notions about the zones, and of apology for my innovations. The red shore is the garden of the red plants. Some notion of the redness of some of them is given by their names; for example, Cruoria pellita, the gory-skin, which looks like a splash of bright blood. I have seen a rock crevice a foot deep, and with four or five feet of surface, which looked as if it had been papered or tapestried with this gory skin. The crabs of the other zones are brown or purple, while the crabs of the red zone are red. There is one which is called the strawberry crab, because the carapace is coloured like strawberries. Fixed animals are numerous on the red shore, and therefore there will be no difficulty in describing the zoological geography of it.

Colour is, I submit, the mark of the zones which is drawn by nature. The fixed colonies of animals ought, I think, to determine localities in zoological geography, as fixed towns serve as marks in political geography. Depth of water is only one of the conditions in the choice of habitat, and does not possess the importance on the shores which is given to it in books. As some of my readers may wish to know the views of my predecessors respecting the zones, I may state them briefly. Audouin and Milne-Edwards divided the seashore into five zones. The characters by which they distinguished them are hydrographical, botanical, and zoological. Hydrographically viewed, the first zone is dry at ordinary tides; the second commences below high-water mark when the tide is out; the third is bare at low tide; the fourth is bare at very low tides; and the fifth is never left uncovered by the sea. Botanically characterised, the first is the ulvacean, the second the laminarian, the third the coralline, the fourth the great laminarian, and the fifth the nullipore zone: and these distinguished zoologists characterise the first zone zoologically by the balani; the second by the turbo, patella, purpura, nassa, actinæ, talitrus, orchestia, &c.; the third by mytilus, patella, green actinæ and compound ascidia; the fourth by patella pellucida, asteria, calleanassa, &c.; and the fifth by pectens, portunidæ, maiæ, &c. In all, they enumerate four or five hundred species of animals. The British Association, while adopting the zones of the French naturalists, reduce them to four—the littoral, laminarian, coralline, and deep sea coral zones.

The English word shore seems preferable to the Greek word zone. Shore comes from the Saxon sciran, and signifies the score—the bit shorn off. With regard generally to the innovation of translating the learned names when they are good, and using the literal English translation as the name, I do it because I think it will be time enough for me to write Greek when I shall have the honour of addressing a large circle of Grecian country cousins. Since I have adopted it, I have been informed that this innovation has been introduced simultaneously into Germany by several naturalists.

CHIP.

A BLANK PRIZE.

Bankers and Receivers-General at Humbughausen and elsewhere have, now and then, enclosed me lottery-tickets that are, they say, sure to make my fortune. These fellows, I know now to be generally Jews of the lamest class, whom no one would trust, personally, with a florin. Bankers they are not, but receivers-general they are; for they are ready to take in anything and anybody. It once happened that I retained a ticket for one of these lotteries, and that it was drawn a prize of three hundred florins; for the full amount of which the banker and receiver-general sent me tickets warranted undrawn. Since I preferred the money, however, I sent the successful number to the respectable landlord of the Weidenbusch, who had the greatest difficulty in recovering the amount in well-filed Prussian thalers. Jacob expressed as much rage at being forced to pay as if he had actually been defrauded of so much precious metal, and the obliging innkeeper was not without doubts about the safety of his head in some of the filthy windings of the local Jewry. There is an instance of one of these receivers-general having distributed four tickets of each number he was authorised to sell. One of these turning out to be the great prize, he instantly received the money for it, and decamped.

It happened, in another case,—and this is, just now my story—that a tradesman in an adjacent state had purchased, at Frankfort-on-Main, an original ticket; which, having been drawn a prize of one hundred thousand florins, it was to be expected that he would see the announcement of his good fortune in the papers of the next day. No time was lost, therefore; for, if the grocer once reached Frankfort, he would claim payment of the administration, and so Israel would lose the gold. The receiver-general therefore dispatched his brother in the assumed character of a police-agent, and his nephew as a gendarme. Arrived at the small town in which the victim lived, the mock-functionary said to him:

"Herr Müller, I wish to speak with you privately, and this person must be present at our conference." Grocer, somewhat alarmed at the mysterious air and intimation, retired with the visitors to his back-room.

"You ought to know, Herr Müller, that there is a law, awarding fine and imprisonment, to those who gamble in foreign lotteries; a distinct information has been laid that you purchased the ticket, Number——. It is registered in your name, and my duty is to bring you before our president, in arrest, and accompanied by this gendarme. You will

observe that, to spare your feelings and avoid disgracing you, we have been permitted to execute our function privately. We will get a third horse for you in ten minutes; and, at eight o'clock we shall reach our destination."

"But, Mr. Commissary," said the dupe, "the people here are not so stupid as to see me carried off between two strangers, without imagining some cause connected with police. I shall be ruined in my business and in my prospects, too; for Stadt-Rath Haebeler will never give me his daughter, who was to have married me next month, if I am degraded by imprisonment. What can be done to avert this calamity?"

"Nothing. The proofs are too distinct. Three months are soon passed. The prison is not quite so bad as you may have heard."

"Woe is me! and my business that was going on so well."

"Justice cannot take your business into consideration, Herr Müller. It was for you to think of that when you committed an illegal act."

Here the gendarme whispered, as if to remind the commissary of police that they should be late for the prison, and that there was no use in talking. "I really must require you to make your little preparations, and to go with us," said the commissary.

"This is frightful! For the sake of mercy, let me send to my lawyer, else tell me some way to avoid this punishment."

"Properly, Herr Müller, I could neither let you do one thing nor the other; but, as you seem sincerely to repent of your offence, I will suggest the only expedient that can save you."

"Pray tell me at once, anything—anything, dear, good Mr. Commissary."

"Make the ticket over to a person in Frankfort, for example—to the person of whom you bought it. Put to your transfer a date earlier than the information sworn against you, and then we shall be able to exculpate you. Give me the ticket and the letter of renunciation, and I will go over with it. But still there may be some expenses which—"

"Never mind that, I will pay any charges. Here is a certificate that the ticket belongs still to the man who sent it to me; for I refuse to pay for it now, and declare that I have not paid for it at any former time. The ticket itself is inclosed. Here, also, are a hundred thalers in good Prussian notes for the expenses. Pray, worthy officers, make haste, and bring me word soon that no further injury will accrue to me on account of the ticket. Hans! give these gentlemen some wine. They have been kind enough to tell me something about a debtor who has kept himself out of my way. A pleasant journey to you, gentlemen. Good-bye, until we meet again."

Scarcely had the false commissary and his spurious myrmidon got clear of the town, when a busy neighbour who had just returned from Frankfort, came into the shop with a printed paper in his hand.

"My dear neighbour! you had a ticket—"

"Hush! for heaven's sake, not a word of that!"

"Well! but I think you have won."

"Impossible! I had no ticket."

"How, no ticket! I saw you pay for it!"

"Would you, neighbour, bear witness against me? Never mind, I have signed a renunciation of my ticket in favour of the collector."

"Was it Number ——?"

"Yes."

"Then you have renounced the hundred thousand florins."

"Have I?" cried Müller. "Am I the greatest ass the sun has set upon this night? What—what is the penalty for gambling in the foreign lotteries?"

"A hundred florins fine, or imprisonment in case of default."

"Is it regular to send the accused parties under arrest to the tribunal?"

"Certainly not, if they are householders, or persons in the condition of procuring bail. It is a mere civil suit."

"I *am* an ass!"

Then Müller told the entire story. The alarm was given, pursuit was commenced, the townsmen and their wives came to congratulate their neighbour, and stayed to condole. Old Haebeler shuffled up to say, that he would never give his daughter to a man who had luck and had thrown it away like a dolt. The receiver-general pleaded that on the day the renunciation was dated he had sold the ticket to one Aaron Schleier, who was gone to Podolia; but, before leaving, had passed it to somebody whose name he did not know, and that the administration had already paid its value to the swindling bearer.

SPRINGS IN THE DESERT.

I pace the long deserted rooms,
Still striving to recall
The sounds of footsteps on the stairs,
Or voices in the hall.

Along the walks and up the lawn,
I wander every day;
And sit beneath the mulberry's shade,
Where most we loved to play.

No stir of feet the stillness breaks,
No dear familiar tone;
Since taking each her separate way,
They left me here alone.

To love them, and their love to share
Was life and joy to me;
I was the eldest of the house;
My sisters they were three.

As one who marks the bud unfold
A flower of radiant hue,
I marvelled day by day to find
How beautiful they grew.

I knew them pure, and fit for life,
If earthly life were given;
And O! I knew if they should die,
They were as fit for Heaven.

Our childhood was a merry time;
And grief—if grief we knew—
Seemed only sent, like rain, to make
The flowers spring up anew.

We parted; one to lordly halls
In foreign climes was led;
Where love each day some new delight
O'er her life's pathway shed.

The other chose a lowlier lot;
A poor man's home to share,
To cheer him at his daily toil,
And soothe his daily care.

The last and youngest,—where is she?—
I thought she would have stayed
To talk with me of other days
Beneath the mulberry's shade.

I loved her, as a mother loves;
And nightly, on my breast
She laid her fair and gentle head,
And sung herself to rest.

I knew she could not find her peer
Among the sons of clay;
Yet how I wept, when Angels came
To take my flower away!

And years have passed—long silent years—
Since first I dwelt alone
Within the old deserted house,
Whence so much love was gone.

I was not, like my sisters, fair,
Nor light of heart as they;
I always knew that mine would be
A lowly, lonely way.

But they who deem my portion hard,
Know not that wells are found
In deserts wild, whose silent streams
Make green the parchèd ground.

There's not a blade of grass—a leaf—
A breath of summer air—
But stirs my heart with love for Him
Who made this earth so fair.

And many a lowly friend have I,
Or sick, or sad of heart,
Who hails my coming steps with joy,
And sighs when I depart.

No day is ever long; and night
Some gentle spirit brings,
To whisper thoughts of other worlds
And of diviner things.

And if, when evening shadows fall,
I sad or lonely feel,
I kneel me down in that same room
Where we four used to kneel.

And there I say the evening prayer
We four were wont to say:
The very place hath power to charm
All gloomier thoughts away.

I have a thousand memories dear,
And quiet joys untold;
For God but takes his gifts away,
To give them back tenfold.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

THE DROSCHKY.

THE Ischvostchik is not necessarily an adult. Though many of the class are men advanced in years, with beards quite snowy and venerable to look at (terrible old rogues are these to cheat), there are, on the other hand, numerous droschky-drivers who are lads—nay, mere children. It is desperately ludicrous to see a brat, some half-score years old, in full Ischvostchik accoutrement; for they will not bate an inch of the time-honoured costume; and adhere rigidly to the long caftan and the gaudy sash. As large men's size appears to be the only pattern recognised for Ischvostchik boots and hats in Russia, the diminutive heads and spare little legs of these juvenile drivers are lost in a forest of felt and an abyss of boot-leather. I can recall now more than one of those little pale, weazened, frightened faces bonneted in a big hat, precisely like the man who is taking his wife's hand in that strange mirror picture of John Van Eyck's, in the National Gallery—the Alpha and Omega of art mechanism, as it seems to me; for if Van Eyck were the inventor of oil-painting, he has surely in this dawn-picture attained the highest degree of perfection in the nicety of manipulation to which that vehicle lends itself.

A plague on John Van Eyck, that he should make me unmindful of my Ischvostchik! I want an excuse, too, for returning to him, for I have something to say about the vehicle he gains his livelihood by driving—the Droschky. There is the same amount of despairing uncertainty prevalent concerning the orthography of this attelage—in plain English, a one-horse shay—as about its conductor. In half-a-dozen books and prints I find Droschky spelt in as many different ways: it appears as Droschka, Droski, Drotchki, Droskoï, and Drusschka; I am perfectly ignorant as to the proper method of writing the word; but I have elected Droschky as the most generally accepted, and I intend to abide by it.

The real Russian, or Moscow droschky, is simply a cloth-covered bench upon clumsy C springs on four wheels, with a little perch in front, which the driver bestrides. You, the passenger, may seat youself astride, or sideways, on the bench. It may, perhaps, serve to give a more definite and pictorial idea of the droschky, if I describe it as a combination of elongated side-saddle (such as are provided for the rising generation, and endured by long-suffering donkeys in the vicinity of the Spaniard Tavern at Hampstead), and an Irish outside car. The abominable jolting, dirt, and discomfort of the whole crazy vehicle, forcibly recall, too, that Hibernian institution. There

is a leathern paracrotte on either side, to prevent the mud from the wheels flying up into your face, and the bases of these paracrottes serve as steps to mount, and a slight protection in the way of footing against your tumbling out of the ramshackle concern into the mud: but the imbecility, or malevolence of the droschky-builder has added a tin, or pewter covering for this meagre flooring, and as your bones are being rattled over the Russian stones, your feet keep up an incessant and involuntary skating shuffle on this accursed pewter pavement. There is nothing to hold on by, save the driver, and a sort of saddle-pummel turned the wrong way, at the hinder end of the bench; the droschky rocks from side to side, threatening to tip over altogether at every moment. You mutter, you pray, you perspire; your hooked fingers seek little inequalities of the bench to grasp at, as Claude Frollo's tried to claw at the stone copings when he fell from the tower of Notre Dame; you are jolted, you are bumped, you are scarified; you are dislocated; and, all this while, your feet are keeping up the diabolical goose-step on the pewter beneath. Anathema, Maranatha! if there be a strong north wind blowing (Boreas has his own way, even in the height of summer, in Petersburg), and your hat be tempted to desert your head, and go out on the loose! There is such a human, or perhaps, fiendish perversity in hats, when they blow off—such a mean, malignant, cruel, and capricious persistence in rolling away, and baffling you—that I can scarcely refrain from shaking my fist at my vagrant head-covering while I am running after it; and swearing at it when I capture it; and punching its head well before I resettle it on my own. But what are you to do if your hat flies off in a droschky? You daren't jump out: sudden death lies that way. The driver will see you at Nishi-Novgorod before he will descend to recover it; although he has not the slightest shame in asking you to get down to pick up his whip. All you can do is to shut your eyes, tie a pocket-handkerchief over your head, and buy a new hat; which, by the way, will cost you, for a very ordinary one, ten silver roubles—a guinea and a half. As to stopping the droschky, getting down, and chasing the fugitive—that might be done in England; but not here. It seems almost as difficult to pull up a droschky as a railway train. The wheels would seem to be greased to such a terrific extent, that they run or jolt on of their own accord: and two hundred yards' notice is the least you can, in any conscience, give your Ischvostchik, if you want him to "stoi." Meantime, with that execrable north wind, where would your hat be? In the Neva, or half-way to the Lake of Ladoga.

When the Scythians (was it the Scythians, by the way?) were first made acquainted with horses, we read that their young men desirous of taking lessons in equitation were, to prevent accidents, bound to their mettlesome steeds with cords. I think it would be expedient, when a foreigner takes his first airing in a droschky, to tie him to the bench, or at least to nail his coat-tails thereto. The born Russians, curiously, seem to prefer these perilous vehicles to the more comfortable droschkies. They seldom avail themselves of the facility of bestriding the narrow bench, colossus like, but sit jauntily sideways, tapping that deadly pewter with their boot-tips as confidently and securely as the Amazons who scour through the tan at the Hippodrome on bare-backed steeds. Ladies, even, frequently patronise these breakers on wheels. It is a sight to see their skirts spreading their white bosoms to the gale, like ships' canvas; a prettier sight to watch their dainty feet pit-a-patting on that pewter of peril I have before denounced. When a lady and gentleman mount one of these droschkies, and are, I presume on tolerably brotherly and sisterly terms, it seems to be accepted as a piece of cosy etiquette for the lady to sit in the gentleman's lap.

While waiting at a house-door for a fare engaged therein, or at any other time that he is not absolutely compelled to be driving, the Ischvostchik has a habit of abandoning the splash-board, and reclining at full length on his back on the droschky bench, there to snore peacefully, oblivious of slavery, unmindful of the stick. To the full length of his trunk would be perhaps a more correct expression, for the bench is only long enough for his body down to the knees; and his big-booted legs dangle comfortably down among the wheels. He will sleep here, in the sun, in the rain, in weather hot and cold; and, were it not for casual passengers and the ever-pursuing police soldier, he would so sleep, I believe, till Doomsday. There is one inconvenience to the future occupant of the droschky in this; that, inasmuch as it is pleasant, in a hotel, to have your bed warmed, there are differences of opinion as to the comfort of having your seat warmed vicariously: especially when the animated warming-pan is a Russian and an Ischvostchik, and, and —well, the truth must out—ragged, dirty, greasy, and swarming with vermin.

I know that I am sinning grievously against good manners in barely hinting at the existence of such things; but I might as well attempt to write a book on Venice without mentioning the canals, as to chronicle Russian manners and customs without touching ever so delicately on the topic of the domestic animalculæ of the empire. There is a little animal friendly to man, and signifying, I have been given to understand, love, whose existence is very properly ignored in the select circles of refined England, but who is as familiar in good society at Petersburg as the lively flea is at Pera. It was my fortune, during a

portion of my stay in Russia, to occupy an apartment in a very grand house on the Nevskoï Perspective, nearly opposite the cathedral of Our Lady of Kasan. The house itself had an ecclesiastical title, being the Dom-Petripavloskoï, or house of St. Peter and St. Paul, and was an appanage of that wealthy church. We had a marble staircase to our house, imitation scagliola columns, and panels painted quite beautifully with Cupids and Venuses. A Russian lady of high rank occupied a suite of apartments on the same floor; and, late one night, when I was about retiring to rest, her well-born excellency (I used to call her the Queen of Sheba, she was so stately) condescended to order her body-servant to tap at my door, and tell me that the Barynia desired to speak with me. I accordingly had an interview with her at the door of her apartment, she being also about to retire for the night. She had something to show me, she said. Russian ladies always have something to show you—a bracelet, a caricature, a tame lizard, a musical box, a fly in amber, or some novelty of that description—but this was simply a remarkably handsome black velvet mantle, with two falls of rich black lace to it. I knew that it was new, and had come home only that afternoon from Madame Zoë Falcon's, the court modiste in the Mala Millionne; so, expecting that the countess, with the elegant caprice in which her distinguished position gave her a right to indulge, wished to have, even at two o'clock in the morning, the opinion of an Anglisky upon her mantle, I said critically that it was very pretty; whereupon, a taper finger was pointed to a particular spot on the mantle, and a silvery voice said, "Regardez!" I did regarder, and, on my honour, I saw strolling leisurely over the black velvet, gravely, but confidently, majestic but unaffected, his white top-coat on, his hat on one side, his umbrella under his arm (if I may be permitted to use such metaphorical expressions), as fine a LOUSE as ever was seen in St. Giles's. I bowed and withdrew.

I must explain that I had previously expressed myself as somewhat sceptic to this lady respecting the animalcular phenomena of Russia; for I had been stopping in a German hotel at Wassily-Ostrow, where the bedrooms were scrupulously clean; and it must be also said that the lady in question, though a Russian subject, and married to an officer in the guards, had been born and educated in western Europe. Had she been a native Russian, little account would she have taken of such a true-born subject of the Czar at that late hour, I ween.

Although the violent and eccentric oscillations of a single-bodied droschky undoubtedly conduce to a frame of mind which is a sovereign cure for hypochondriasis, yet the drawbacks to its advantages (the last one especially) are so fearful, that I question whether it be worth while to undergo so much suffering as the transition from a state of chronic melancholy to one of raving madness. In the provinces, I am sorry to write it, it is oftimes but Hobson's choice—this or none; but in St. Petersburg (and I suppose, in coronation time, at Moscow), there is no lack of double-bodied droschkies, in which you may ride without any very imminent danger of a dislocation of the arm, and a compound fracture of the thigh, or so, per verst. The form of the double-bodied droschky, though not very familiar to our Long Acre carriage architects, is well known in France. The inhabitants of the Rue du Jeu de Paume, at Versailles, must be well acquainted with it; for therein it was whilom (and is so still, I hope) the custom of the great French painter, Monsieur HORACE VERNET, to ride in a trim coquettish little droschky, presented to him by the Czar Nicholas. In his latter days, his imperial friend did not like Horace quite so much: the impudent artist having been misguided enough to publish some letters which had the misfortune to be true, and not quite favourable to the imperial régime. This droschky was, it need scarcely be said, a gem of its kind—a model Attelage Russe. The horse—likewise a present from the emperor—was a superb coal-black étalon of the Ukraine; and, to complete the turn-out, the driver was in genuine Ischvostchik costume—in hat, boots, and caftan complete. I want to see the double-bodied droschky in London, Ischvostchik and all. I am tired of tandems, dog-carts, mail-phaëtons, and hooded cabriolets, with tall horses and short tigers. What could there be more spicy down the road than a droschky, sparkling, shining, faultless to a nut, a rivet, as our matchless English coachbuilders only know how to turn out an equipage; with a fast-trotting mare in the shafts, and a driver with a bushy beard, a sky-blue caftan, shiny boots, and an Ischvostchik's hat? I think John Coachman would not object to growing a beard and wearing a caftan for a reasonable advance on his wages. I wonder if any of the stately English hidalgos I saw just before I left Russia—if any of those ethereally-born Secretaries of Legation, and unpaid attachés—will bring home a droschky from the land of the Russ, or, on their return, order one from Laurie or Houldditch. There are, perhaps, two slight obstacles to the naturalisation of the droschky in England. In the first place, you couldn't have the Ischvostchik thrashed if he didn't drive well; in the next, the English gentleman is innately a driving animal. He likes to take the ribbons himself, while his groom sits beside with folded arms. In Russia, the case is precisely contrary. The Russian moujik is almost born a coachman; at all events, he begins to drive in his tenderest childhood. The Russian gentleman scarcely ever touches a pair of reins. The work is too hard; besides, is there not Ivan Ivanovitch to take the trouble off our hands? In St. Petersburg,

it is entirely contrary to etiquette for a gentleman to be seen driving his own equipage; and I have no doubt that any gentleman so sinning would draw upon himself a reprimand from the emperor, or, at least, the evil eye of the police. This extraordinary government seems almost to be jealous of private equestrianism. In no capital in Europe do you see such a woeful paucity of cavaliers as in St. Petersburg. I do not speak of the city proper, in which the execrable pavement is sufficient to ruin any horse's feet; but in the environs, where there are good roads, you seldom meet any persons in plain clothes on horseback. Either it is not bon-ton to ride in mufti (and, to be candid, there are very few gentlemen, save the members of the corps diplomatique, who ever appear out of uniform), or to have a horse to oneself, and to ride it, is considered in certain quarters an encroachment on the imperial prerogative of a cavalry force; or—and this I am led shrewdly to suspect is the real reason—the Russians are bad horsemen, and don't care about equitation when not upon compulsion. Be good enough to bear in mind that the Tatars and Cossacks, who live almost entirely on horseback, are not Russians. The Russian cavalry soldiers sit their horses in the clumsiest, painfullest manner you can conceive; and, though they have the vastest riding-schools, and the most awfully severe manège to be found anywhere, the Russian cavalry are notoriously inefficient as troopers: they are grenadiers on horseback, nothing more. They can do everything, and more than western soldiers, in the way of manœuvring, curveting, and caracoling, of course—they MUST do it, or the omnipotent Stick will know the reason why; but, in actual warfare, it is astonishing how our friend the Cossack goes up to premium, and how the dragoon goes down to discount. The peasants of Little Russia make tolerably good troopers; which is difficult to understand, seeing that with them horses are scarce, and their principal experience in riding and driving is confined to oxen; but the Russian proper is almost as much a stranger to a horse's back as a man-o'-war's man is, though he, the Russian, has a natural genius for droschky driving. And this I write after having seen a review of the Chevalier Guards, who, if size and magnificence of appointment are to be considered as a test of capacity, are the twelve hundred finest men upon the twelve hundred finest horses in the world.

Now and then—but it is a case of extreme rarity of occurrence—you see a Gentilhomme Russe driving (himself) a feeble imitation of an English dogcart, in a leafy road on one of the pretty islands in the Neva. Every Russian, of whatever rank he may be—from the sun, moon, and starred general, to the filthy moujik; from the white-headed octogenarian to the sallow baby in the nurse's arms—every child of the Czar, has a worn, pinched, dolorous, uneasy expression in his countenance, as if his boots hurt him, or as if he had a cankerworm somewhere, or a scarlet letter burnt into his breast, like the Rev. Mr. Dimsdale. They are not good to look at—Russian faces. People say that it is the climate, or the abuse of vapour-baths, that gives them that unlovely look. But a bad climate won't prevent you from looking your neighbour in the face; two vapour-baths per week won't pull down the corners of your mouth, and give you the physiognomy of a convict who would like to get into the chaplain's good graces. No. It is the Valley of the Shadow of Stick through which these men are continually passing, that casts this evil hang-dog cloud upon them. Well, imagine the Gentilhomme Russe in his dog-cart with four reins, no whip, and that rueful visage I have spoken of. By his side is a slave-servant, evidently shaved against his will, and who is of the same (hirsute) opinion still; for bristles are obstinately starting out of forbidden corners. He has a shabby blue cap with a faded gold-lace band, and a livery that does not come within the wildest possibility of having been made for him. He tries mournfully to fold his arms, with those paws covered with dirty Berlin gloves, and he makes superhuman efforts not to fall asleep. Master and man are clearly in a wrong position. The horse (a first-rate one, with a flowing mane and tail) evidently despises the whole concern, and kicks his heels up at it. The dogcart is badly built, the wheels are out of balance, and the paint is dingy. They never seem to wash Russian carriages; I have lived over a mews, and ought to know. This Gentilhomme Russe in the dogcart is about as mournful a sight as is to be seen anywhere, even in Russia.

But, when the Russians are sensible enough to abandon imitation, and to stand or fall by their own native equipages, they can make a brave show. Of little, private, double-bodied droschkies, there are swarms; and in some of these you will see horses worth from seven to twelve hundred silver roubles each. Many a puny cornet in the guards, too, has his calèche lined with moiré-antique, and drawn by two splendid, black, Ukraine horses. I may observe that the horses never wear blinkers, and that, though full of mettle, they are very little addicted to shying. The harness is quite peculiar and Russian, consisting of a purple net of leather-work profusely spangled with small discs of silver. Only some of the court carriages are drawn by horses harnessed in the English manner. Pretty as their own caparisons are, the Russians sigh for foreign fashions; and extravagant prices are given for a set of English harness. In the native harness there seem to be a good many unnecessary straps and tassels; but the backs of the horses are left almost entirely free, which has a very picturesque and wild horse of the prairie sort of effect. Coal black is the

favourite hue; next, grey. With all horses, the sensible custom is observed of allowing the manes and tails to grow; and the consequence is, that the animals look about thrice as handsome and as noble (bless their honest hearts!) as the be-ratted, be-greyhounded steeds we see at home.

The coachman of the Princess Schiliapoff (or any other princess you like to find a name for), the conductor of those coal-black steeds (the Schiliapoff has twenty-five hundred serfs, and half the Ogurzi Perspective belongs to her), is own brother to the ragged, dirty Ischvostchik. Nor, though he is coachman to a princess, is his social position one whit better than that of Ivan Ivanovitch, sprawling on his back on the droschky bench. His caftan is made of superfine broadcloth, sometimes of velvet, slashed at the back and sides with embroidery, as if he had been knouted with a golden whip; his hat is of the shiniest nap, has a velvet band, a silver buckle, and is decorated with a bunch of rosy ribbons, a bouquet of artificial flowers, or a peacock's feather. He has a starched white neckcloth, buckskin gloves, rings in his ears; his hair is scrupulously cut, and his beard is bushy, well trimmed, oiled, and curled. He has a sash radiant with bright colours, and the top of a crimson silk shirt just asserts itself above his caftan. It is probable that he sometimes gets meat to eat, and that he has decent sleeping accommodation in the stables, along with the horses. But he is a SLAVE, body and bones. The Princess Schiliapoff may sell him to-morrow if she have a mind [to those who have an idea that Russian serfs cannot be sold away from the soil, I beg to recall Mr. Fox's recommendation to Napoleon Bonaparte on the assassination question, "Put all that nonsense out of your head"]. The princess may send him to the police, and have him beaten like a sack if he take a wrong turning or pull up at the wrong milliner's shop: the princess's majordomo may, and does, kick, cuff, and pull his hair, whenever he has a mind that way. The princess may, if he have offended her beyond the power of stick to atone for, send him as an exile to Siberia, or into the ranks of the army as a soldier. There are many noble families who pride themselves on having handsome men as coachmen; there are others, like Sir Roger de Coverley, who like to have old men to drive them. I have seen some of this latter category, quite patriarchs of the box, venerable, snowy-bearded old men, that might have sate for portraits of the Apostles in the cartoons. It is pleasant, is it not, to be six feet high and as handsome as Dunois, and to be sold to pay a gambling debt? To be sixty years of age, and have a white head, and grand-children, and to be scourged with birch rods like a schoolboy? And these good people are WHITE, Mrs. Harriett Beecher Stowe, White, ma'am!

The Russian imperial court IS a court; by which, on the principle of coals being coals, I mean that the Czar has always in his train a vast number of grand dignitaries of the household, and bonâ fide courtiers, constantly attendant on and resident with him. These courtly personages, when they drive about in carriages, are permitted to have a footman on the box beside the coachman. This John Thomas, or Ivan Tomasovitch, to be strictly Russian, is unpowdered and unwhiskered. There is no medium in a serf's shaving here; he is either full-bearded or gaol-cropped. His shirt, and indeed lower habiliments are doubtful, for he wears — over all, summer and winter—a huge cloak descending to his heels, of the very brightest scarlet, — a cloak with a deep cape and a high collar.* The edges of this garment are passemented with broad bands of gold embroidered with countless double eagles on black velvet, and these have such a weird and bat-like, not to say demoniac, effect, that the Muscovite flunkey clad in this flaming garment and with an immense cocked-hat stuck fore and aft on his semi-shaven head, bears a fantastic resemblance to an India-house beadle, of whom the holy inquisition has fallen foul, and who, shorn of his staff, but with his red cloak converted into a San Benito, is riding to an auto da fé in his master's carriage. Some general officers have soldier-footmen, who sit in the rumble of the calèche in the military grey cloak and spiked helmet. The ambassadors have their chasseurs plumed, braided and couteau-de-chassed; but with these exceptions, the outward and visible sign of the flunkey is wanting in Petersburgh. Yet everybody keeps a carriage who can afford it; and many do so who can't. I was very nearly having half a private droschky myself; the temptation was so great, the horses so good, the coachman so skilful, the difficulties of pedestrianism so great, the public conveyances so abominably bad. As I have remarked, the majority of carriage-keepers don't take footmen out with them. I have seen the great Prince Dolgorouki, the chief of the gendarmerie and secret police, the high and mighty wooden-stick in waiting at whose very name I tremble still, step out of one of those modest little broughams called "pill-boxes," open it, and close the door as if he knew not what a footman was, and walk up-stairs to the second-floor of a lodging-house, with his stars, his ribbons, his helmet, his sword, his spurs, unflunkeyed and unannounced. Fall not, however, in the obvious error of imagining that

* The Russians are extravagantly fond of red. That a thing is red, implies with them that it is beautiful; indeed, they have but one word (prekrasse) to express both redness and beauty. The favourite Russian flower is the rose; though, alas! that has far more frequently to be admired in paper or wax than in actual existence. A crimson petticoat is the holiday dress of a peasant girl; and to have a red shirt is one of the dearest objects of a Moujik's ambition.

Ivan Tomasovitch the flunkey lacks in Russian households; within doors he swarms, multiplies himself orientally and indefinitely; but, out of doors, Nous Autres do without him.

Two words more, and I have done with the equipages of the great. Although there are probably no people on earth that attach so much importance to honorific distinctions, caste, costumes, and "sun, moon, and stars" decorations as the Russians; their carriage-panels are singularly free from the boastful, imbecilities of that sham heraldry and harlequinading patchwork which some of us in the west throw like parti-coloured snuff in the eyes of the world to prove our high descent. And, goodness knows, the Russian nobility are barbarically well-born enough. They have plenty of heraldic kaleidoscope-work at home; but they keep it, like their servants, for grand occasions. For ordinary wear, a plain coronet on the panel, or—more frequently still—the simple initials of the occupant, are thought sufficient for a prince's carriage.

A last word. Since my return to Western Europe I have noticed that the dear and delightful sex who share our joys and double our woes—I mean, of course, the Ladies!—have adopted a new, marvellous, and most eccentric fashion in wearing-apparel. I allude to the cunning machines, of a balloon form, composed of crinoline, whalebone, and steel—called, I have heard—sous-jupes bouffantes, and which I conjecture the fair creatures wear underneath their dresses to give them that swaying, staggering nether appearance, which is so much admired—by milliners—and which I can compare to nothing so closely as the Great Bell of Bow in a gale of wind, and far gone in the dropsy. What have the sous jupes bouffantes to do with the coachmen of the Russian boyards? you will ask. This. For a very swell coachman, there is nothing thought more elegant and distinguished than a most exaggerated bustle. The unhappy wretches are made to waspicate their waists with their sashes; and, all around in a hundred plaits, extend the skirts of their caftans. What species of under-garments they wear, or what mechanical means they adopt to inflate their skirts, I know not; but they have exactly the same Tombola appearance as our fashionable ladies. Isn't it charming ladies? Only twenty years since, you borrowed a fashion from the Hottentot Venus, and now skirts are worn à la Moujik Russe.

There are some old Russian families who are yet sufficiently attached to ancient, pigtail observances, as to drive four horses to their carriages. The leaders are generally a long way ahead; there is a prevailing looseness in the way of traces; and the postilion, if any, sternly repudiates the bare idea of a jacket with a two-inch tail, and adheres to the orthodox caftan; a portion of whose skirts he tucks into his bucket-boots along with his galligaskins. Caftan and boots and breeches, breeches, boots and caftan, bushy beard and low-crowned hat! Dear reader, how often shall I have to reiterate these words—how long will it be before you tire of them? There are sixty-five millions of people in this Valley of the Drybones; but they are all alike in their degree. The Russian people are printed, and there are thousands of impressions of gaudy officers struck in colours, gilt and tinselled like Mr. Parks's characters (those that cost three-and-sixpence); and there are millions of humble moujiks and ischvostchiks, roughly pulled and hastily daubed—only a penny plain and twopence coloured.

A DAY OF RECKONING.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

Four months elapsed, and in the midst of the dark winter-days Alice's son struggled into the world. Privation had come into Robin's home before this; the photographic business did not prosper, and a stray guinea for a caricature on passing events was all that found its way into the household purse; but both Alice and her husband were marvellously cheerful under the circumstances. At last Robin determined to apply to his father for the restoration of his bachelor allowance, and, in that intent, he went early one morning to his office. Carl was there, and received him with ceremonious contempt; but when Robin opened his business, and the father seemed inclined to relent, he interposed with sneers and threats, and a stormy quarrel ensued, which resulted in the younger brother's being forbidden his father's presence.

That evening Ike and his favourite son sat longer than usual over their wine; not that either drank much, for both were abstemious men, but that each had a mind preoccupied. Ike had been considerably disturbed by the scene at the office, and his face now wore a grey, anxious look; his hand was often lifted uneasily to his head, but Carl was so absorbed that he did not notice the gesture. At length the old man rose and walked unsteadily to the fireplace, against which he supported himself. When he spoke his utterance was indistinct and slow; evidently some strange influence was upon him.

"We might have left him that paltry three hundred, Carl: it was not much," he said, anxiously and deprecatingly. A cold sneer curved Carl's lips, but he neither stirred nor looked up. Ike continued in the same tone: "I think I shall tell Wormsley to let him have it—the lad seemed disheartened to-day: Alice ill, and the child to look to. Do you think Marston will have left the office?"

Carl started up. Marston was his father's confidential clerk, a man who had always stood Robin's friend. "Wait until to-morrow, sir, and you'll think better of it,"

he said shortly. Ike moved a step or two forward, stretched out his hand, tried to say something, and fell upon the floor stricken with paralysis.

About a quarter-of-an-hour afterwards, a breathless messenger arrived at Robin's door, and rang the photographer's bell. It was too late for business, but he went down from Alice's room to see what was wanted, and was told that he must go up home immediately, for his father had had a fit, and was not expected to survive the night. He returned for a moment to his wife, bade her not wake for him, as he might be detained, kissed her and the child, and then accompanied the servant to his father's house in all haste.

His brother Carl, Marston the clerk, a physician, and the housekeeper, were in the chamber as he entered it. The old man was making a frightful effort to speak, but could not articulate a word. This continued for some time; then the stupor of insensibility seemed to shroud all his faculties. Poor Robin held one of the powerless hands, and wept as bitterly as if his father had been to him what he had been to Carl, while his brother stood by quite phlegmatic and unmoved; Marston and the female servant were also deeply affected. The physician tried all the usual remedies without effect, and delivered oracular sentiments in a professional tone: Mr. Branston might rally and live for months, or it might be years; or another fit might supervene and prove fatal. For the present, nothing more could be done, but if the patient revived, he might have a few drops of a certain medicine, for which a prescription was given—a very few drops, in water—and then the man of physic departed, pretty well aware that Death was lying in wait to take possession of what he left.

Ike being fallen into a sort of lethargy which seemed likely to continue, Robin ran home to reassure his wife, promising to come back in a few hours. Marston lay down to rest in an adjoining room, and the housekeeper went to her bed. Carl being left alone in his father's room, sat down by the bed-side to keep his watch; it was the first time such a vigil had fallen to him, and the deadly stillness of the house at midnight weighed on him like a nightmare. This man never had the company of good thoughts, but often a throb of fear came to him in the silent hours. It came now. He got up and lifted the curtain from the window. There was starlight in the sky, clear and pure, and in the room a dim lamp burning under a shade. On the mantelshelf where it stood were ranged bottles, full, half-full, and empty, and at the end the prescription brought from the chemist's that night. It was plainly labelled, and Carl's eye, dropping from the lamp, fell on it and fixed there; wandered away; returned stealthily, as if afraid of the thought it pointed, and then glanced at the grey old head under the crimson drapery of the bed. Carl shuddered, as if chilled to the bone, walked to the door of the room where Marston lay; put his hand upon the handle; drew it back; halted irresolute. A slight moaning noise called him back to his father's side; he was struggling to speak again. Carl bent his ear close to his mouth, and distinguished a few disconnected words: "Robin—wife—my will—Marston—at once;" he seemed to be in an agony of haste.

Carl stood upright for a moment, and looked at his father's working countenance; then half-filling a wine-glass with water, poured into it some of the contents of the medicine. Once he stayed his hand; then, swift as thought, poured on, and presented the draught to the old man's lips. He swallowed it all, and lay back with his son's arm under him. Carl drew it away, and went behind the curtains, and looked up at the starlit heavens with a ghastly face.

When Robin returned in an hour or two later, his brother met him at the chamber-door. Their father, he said, had had a second seizure and was dead; and the two brothers went down-stairs together.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

Old Ike Branston's funeral was over; the shutters were opened, the blinds drawn up. Carl was by himself in the house—his own house now; and the servants in the kitchen were talking of "master's father—old master," whom they had buried ceremoniously that morning. True to his profession to the last, Ike's will was redolent of charity and twenty pound bequests; but the great bulk of his gains went to his darling Carl; to Robin, nothing—not a shilling. Robin, though grievously disappointed, neither reproached his father's memory, nor complained of his brother's greed. He merely remarked: "If he had lived he would have altered his will; he was more than half-disposed to forgive me the last time I talked to him, if you had not come between us, and you know it, Carl."

Carl did know it; and not finding it convenient to make any asseverations of his goodwill, the brothers parted with a very cool hand-shake, soon after the other people, who had paid Ike Branston the respect of following him to the grave, had dispersed.

The day got over slowly. Dinner-time came, and Carl sat down to his solitary repast, with the white-headed butler, who had served his father ever since his marriage, behind his chair, and a feline-footed man in livery to wait upon him. Not that he was a man who loved state or show, but that he did not like to be alone, was he thus attended. He dragged the ceremonial of dining over a long hour and a-half, but it was ended at last, the round table with the decanters placed by the fire, and the servants gone out. He drew a long breath, as if to free his chest

from some labouring weight, stirred up the fire till every lurking shadow was chased out of the room, and sat down in an easy chair by the hearth—its master.

Its master. He had coveted the place long; he had drawn plans of what he should do when he got it; how important, how respectable, how powerful he should be. These plans recurred to him now very vividly, and there was no more interest or beauty in them than in the handful of white ashes scattered under the grate. He shifted his seat restlessly from side to side, and his face, usually so calm and self-possessed, was of a cold, grey pallor—an awful look he had, as the servant remarked to his fellows in the kitchen, after he had been rung up-stairs twice to replenish the blazing fire.

Contrary to his usual custom, Carl drank glass after glass of wine, then rose and paced the room heavily, as if the companionable sound of his own footsteps was better than the vault-like silence.

"No wonder," said the housekeeper, "no wonder he felt lonely and lost—his father had doted on him; nay, she did believe that, close-handed as old master was known to be, he would have coined his heart for young master."

Suddenly he paused in the centre of the room, and his eyes settled on the great mirror which towered between the mantel and the ceiling. He seemed to see in its depths the heavily-draped crimson bed in which his father died, and between it and the light stood a tall figure like himself pouring a liquid from a phial into a glass of water; a dim lurid glare was on the face of the glass in which the objects wavered shadowy, and then gradually faded, until it reflected only the sweep of the window curtain behind him and his own stony face.

"It is only a delusion," he said aloud, but his limbs shook as if palsy-stricken, and his heart beat like a hammer. He rang the bell, and when the servant appeared he held him in talk some time, asking trivial questions, and giving as trivial orders, until the man wondered what had come over him, and suggested that, perhaps, he would like to see his brother, Mr. Robin.

"No; not him. See that this great looking-glass is taken down to-morrow, Stevens; I am going to have a picture in its place," his master said; "that is all—you can go and tell Blundell I want to speak to him."

Blundell, the white-haired butler, came, and stood some five minutes with the door open before Carl spoke, and when he did at last raise his head, he appeared to seek in his mind for what he had intended to say, and, not remembering it, he dismissed the old servant, recalled him, asked for a chamber candlestick, and went up-stairs to his bedroom. Blundell remarked that he never in his life did see a man so shook as Mr. Carl by his father's death.

In the office, during the daytime, when he was surrounded by business, Carl Branston recovered himself; but night after night this fear of solitude returned upon him. Marston observed that while his temper grew more irritable his hardness of character relaxed, and often he manifested a total indifference to opportunities of gain which would once have enlisted all his bad and selfish energies. Carl had made the discovery that a man may be rich, respectable, important, and powerful, while he is utterly and hopelessly wretched. He would have changed places with the bare-footed tramp in the streets, with his miserable debtors, with anybody. In his harassed and dejected state he was often visited by the doctor who had attended his father, and who now recommended him either to travel awhile or to have company in his own house. Carl did not like to stir from home, and could think of nobody for a companion but Mistress Margery Pilkington; so he sent for her, and she came. He had society enough now. O! it was a blissful household where Margery Pilkington ruled.

Ere long, Carl grew more afraid of his cheerful companion than he had ever been either of himself or his solitude. The glare of her eyes pursued him, watched him as steadfastly as if she were his fate patiently biding its hour; she dictated to him on all occasions, great and small, and took complete mastery of him; if he resisted, she menaced him, and there was that in her hard voice and glittering cold eye which said he had better not quarrel with her! And Carl did not quarrel with her; but, after enduring a two years' tyranny—to which old monkish discipline must have been a trifle—Mrs. Margery Pilkington was one morning found dead in her bed, and he was free again.

It was after this event that the house was sold and pulled down: an institution for charitable purposes being built on its site. Carl Branston gave the money, and laid the foundation stone. Afterwards, he went abroad. It is but imperfectly known what he did there. Marston conducted the business at home on his own responsibility. From time to time rumours reached him that Carl had become a papist, and member of a severe community of monks; then, that he was living under some new medical regimen in an establishment near Paris; then, that he was gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem—that he was an attendant at a public hospital—a volunteer with the French army in Algiers—fifty things, of which the brief business letters—"do this, do that"—gave no hint whatever. So Marston believed none of them. His master loved travel, it appeared; let him have it, then; he would find all right whenever it pleased him to come home again.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

A MERRY heart and a good temper will carry their owner blithely through the trials

and difficulties of this troublesome world, when a body who lacks their pleasant buoyancy will sit down in doleful dumps and let his cares ride over him just as they will. Robin Branston and Alice his wife were always poor, struggling and hopeful; the one cheered and upheld the other, and while their family anxieties yearly increased, their natural cheerfulness increased too. The photographic business was poorly remunerative, but Robin was a quick wit at a caricature, and when times were dull he was not superior to lithographing a music title, a circular, or a bill-head; indeed, he could turn his hand to anything in the draughtsman's way, and did; with three curly pates, each a step above the other, and six of the brightest blue eyes in the world looking to papa's hands for all manner of things, he was not—being of a sound heart and head—likely to stand idle in the market-place waiting for something to turn up. Alice was a very comfortable helpmate for him; she always looked bright and pleasant, and prettily dressed in the simplest materials, and her children were daisies for bloom and health; Robin, spite of precarious work and precarious pay, was a happy man in a very happy home. His father had been dead now seven years; his brother Carl, with whom since that event he had held no communication whatever, had been absent from England upwards of five; and his bachelor friends had been drifted hither and thither, until, beyond his fireside, Robin had no very strong interest remaining.

By this fireside, he, his wife and his children, were spending a cheerful Christmas eve. It was stormy out of doors; the wind and the rain were holding high holiday amongst the chimney tops and church steeples; and there was just that sound of hopeless drenched discomfort in the streets that made the crackling fire look the very shrine of household ease and happiness. Robin had the youngest boy on his knee, taking repose after four and twenty journeys to Banbury Cross and back; the eldest had retired into private life under the table to enjoy at peace a new picture-book; and master Frank was lying on the hearth-rug with his shoe-soles in the air, setting out a Robinson Crusoe puzzle; Alice had idle fingers for once, and softly reflective eyes, which looked as if they were seeing pictures in the fire—pictures, perhaps, of a great future for her children, and a calm autumn time for Robin and herself, after their working season was past and gone.

At last she spoke:

"So Carl has come back to England. I wish we were on good terms, Robin; it is unchristian to quarrel for years."

"So it is, Alice. What made you speak of him just now?"

"I was thinking of him, poor fellow. I wish he would come home to us for a month or two, we should do him a world of good. He has never thoroughly got over his father's death."

"How strange our minds should touch the same point. That was just what I was saying to myself. Listen—what is that?"

It was a long irregular knocking at the street door; Robin looked up at his startled wife, and said:

"It can be nobody but Carl!"

It was Carl. He came groping in, dazzled by the change from the darkness in the streets to the glowing brilliance of the parlour. Robin grasped him heartily by the hand and bade him welcome. Carl stood for a minute looking from one figure to the other with a bewildered air, moving his hand uneasily over his face as if to clear away some mist. His appearance was dejected in the extreme: his clothing was drenched, his heavy cloak literally clinging to him with the wet, and his hair lay dabbled in grey streaks upon his forehead. His face was white and worn, as if he had risen from the bed of tedious and painful disease; his voice, when he spoke in answer to his brother's greeting, came up out of his chest, hollow and uncertain, like the voice of a man who has kept long and enforced silence. Alice made him sit down in her own chair.

"You have come off a journey, Carl, and are quite worn out; you must not try to talk yet," said she. He looked into her face for a few seconds, and then asked:

"Why have you put your hair away from your face? You do not look like yourself; the long curls were prettier—the curls were prettier, Robin, were they not? Yes, a great deal prettier." And folding his hands one over the other, he went on repeating "Yes, prettier, a great deal prettier," like one in a dream.

Robin seemed not to observe his odd manner, and after a little while Carl, in watching Alice as she moved about the tea-table, recovered himself somewhat.

"I have come home for good, Robin, now," he said more collectedly; "I have bought a place in Yorkshire, and am going to settle down there and lead the life of a country gentleman—a country gentleman!" and he laughed.

"That will be very nice, Carl; you must be sick of wandering by this time, are you not?" asked Alice.

"Sick of my life—sick of everything! You must come—all of you—and keep me company; the more the merrier. Those are your boys, Robin?" The three children had dropped their several employments on the entrance of their stranger uncle, and now stood at a respectful distance watching him with intense curiosity. At his mention of them Frank drew a step or two nearer, tightly grasping the key of his puzzle, the pieces of which were strewn on the hearth-rug.

"Have you been in a desert-island, Uncle Carl?" he asked, sturdily.

"Yes. I have lived in one all my life."

"Who do you think Frank is like in the face, Carl?" said his mother, to stop the boy's questions, which he was evidently going to propound with great earnestness. Carl looked at him a few seconds, then averted his eyes to the fire, and said, he could not tell.

"We all think him very like his grandfather,—don't you see the resemblance? Look again," persisted Alice, laying her hand affectionately on the boy's head, and raising the hair from his forehead, which was of noble expanse. Carl glanced up peevishly; "I see no likeness at all, unless it be to you—it is to you," he replied, and turned his head.

"Uncle Carl, were there any savage beasts in the island you have come from?" demanded Frank, going up to his chair.

"Savage beasts in plenty—there are nothing else, in fact, where I live."

"And were you alone, uncle?"

"No."

This monosyllable was ejaculated in so fierce a tone that the lad was glad to draw back to his mother, and contemplate his eccentric relative at a distance. After a pause of several minutes Robin asked his brother from what place he had travelled last. "From Rome," was the reply; "it is a fine city, but dead—dead and dug up again."

The way in which Carl Branston enunciated his words was of the strangest. If you could imagine a mechanical imitation of the human voice you would have it; each sentence came out sharply, distinctly, but disconnectedly, as if the speaker were groping in the dark for ideas or memories which he could not seize, or which, having seized, he could not fit with words enough. Robin's nature was not to remember wrongs, or he might have taken a cold satisfaction in the view of his brother's misery; instead he regarded him with deepest commiseration, and Alice, who had never loved him, could scarcely refrain from tears. Carl said, "Your heart was always soft, Alice; but do not waste any sympathy on me. You only see a man who has not slept in a bed for a week. Give me some tea, and I'll go back to my inn."

"Certainly, Carl, you will not leave us to-night, and Christmas time, too?" cried Robin; "think you have come home—you are welcome, heartily welcome—and it is not fit you should stir from the fire-side again. Alice has a room for you."

"Well, so be it," replied Carl; "I will be your guest for to-night, and to-morrow you must be mine."

Frank had gradually crept back to a position in front of his uncle, and stood gazing steadfastly into his countenance with a solemn earnestness and childish curiosity. "Uncle Carl," he began deliberately, "you have lived on a desert-island;—have you seen ghosts also?"

Alice laughed, and drew him away, calling him foolish boy, and bidding him not to tease his uncle, who was tired.

"Seen ghosts! what does the lad mean?—ghosts, what are ghosts?" said Carl, passionately, and with lividly blanched lips. "Ghosts! who says anything about ghosts? I know nothing. Why should I see ghosts? Go away, go away!"

Frank hid himself behind his mother, but it was not him that Carl's clenched fist menaced; it was some shadow-form in the air at which he glared, and which he bade begone. This fit of agitation lasted two or three minutes, and then he sank collapsed and groaning in his chair, with his face buried in his breast. Alice hurried the children out of the room and sent them to their beds. When she returned, Carl was telling his brother how ill he had been in Rome, and that he had not recovered his tone yet. "You see, Robin, I have led a hard life; O, my God, what a miserable life!"

"Our father's death, occurring so suddenly, was a dreadful shock to you, Carl!" said Alice, gently. There was no answer. Carl sat staring into the fire for several minutes; at last he said, very suddenly:

"Go you away, Alice; I have something to tell Robin—go away." As the door closed after her, Carl leaned forward towards his brother, and said in a hoarse whisper, "Robin, I murdered my father!—and—and Margery Pilkington!" Robin started back and stared at him; their eyes met.

"Yes—I poisoned them both, and they—died—died—died, and I am—— How wild you look, brother! what ails you?"

"Have done with these foolish tales, will you!" cried Robin fiercely; "you have command enough to keep in lies, have you not?"

"I put three times the quantity in the glass, and he took it out of my hand;—if I had waited three hours I should have saved my soul—the doctor said he could not have lived longer, but the devil was there tempting me—Margery Pilkington found my secret out the first evening she lived with me, and the persecution I underwent from that woman was awful—and one night she threatened me, and she died. Well, what of that? They said she had disease of the heart——"

"Carl, are these fables conjured out of a sick brain?—they are, surely?" said Robin in an awful tone.

"Devil's truth, every one of them!" returned Carl, with an insane glee; "devil's truth, I tell you. If you don't believe me, ask Margery Pilkington—there she sits in your wife's place. You won't tell Alice—swear!" he sprang up and laid his hand on his brother's shoulder. Robin thrust him back into his chair, and held him with a grasp of iron.

"You are stark mad, Carl, and do not know what you say!"

"I do know what I say. Let me be!" he shook himself roughly, but Robin did not move his hand, for there was a dangerous glitter in Carl's eyes as if he longed to spring on and throttle him. At this instant a second knock was heard at the street door, which caused Carl to cower down pale and trembling, as if he would hide himself. Some one ascended the stairs, Alice opened the door, and a large foreign-looking man entered.

"Mr. Carl is here?" he observed; then whispered to Robin that he had a word for his private ear. "You will stay here a minute, Mr. Carl," he added, lifting a forefinger in a menacing way; "Madame will keep you company till we return." They passed into the adjoining room.

"Mr. Carl escaped us yesterday, sir. You will have discovered that he is mad?" said the stranger; "you will allow us to remove him?"

Robin looked disconcerted. "Mad! yes, I suppose he is—indeed, of course he is. There can be no doubt of it—" he replied, hesitatingly.

"O, he cannot be with any one an hour without betraying it unmistakeably. It is possible that he may have told you his fancies?"

"Yes," said Robin, and paused. The man was watching his countenance closely.

"Absurd self-accusations, eh?" questioned the man, who, spite of his foreign air, spoke English with the native accent. "I see, he has startled you, sir; you were inclined to believe that he really did murder his venerable father and that woman? It is his mania. I have heard him confess all the imaginary circumstances with a wonderful air of reality; but just in the same way I have heard him confess to other deeds, to killing you, for instance, and a girl called Alice, and a variety of thefts, in the most circumstantial manner. His mind—what he has left of it, at least—runs perpetually on murder."

Robin drew a long breath. "How is it that he is under your care?" he asked the stranger.

"Sir, I am a physician; some time since—two years—Mr. Carl Branston placed himself in my hands, and I undertook to protect him against himself. His lucid intervals are few and short. Yesterday morning he was tolerably well, and while walking in the grounds of my house, must have suddenly conceived the design of an escape; but he was easily traced."

"It will be a satisfaction to me to have him near London," said Robin; "I should like to see that his unhappy condition is as much ameliorated as it can be."

"Naturally, sir; but there would be risk of his babblings—marvellously truthful they sound sometimes—rousing scrutiny. On the whole—consider it carefully—on the whole, it would be as well that you should let me remove him abroad," replied the doctor.

"Let us hear what he says himself," said Robin.

"I am sure he will be of my opinion," returned the stranger, and they went back into the first room. Alice had brought in Carl's cloak, thoroughly dry, and he was busy putting it on.

"I am almost ready, doctor," he exclaimed, eagerly.

"You will go with me, will you not? You feel safe?"

"Yes, much safer. Come away." He took no notice of Alice's hand held out to him, or of the tears that she could not restrain, but hurried down the stairs holding the doctor's arm. Robin followed. At the door waited a carriage with another man in it, like a keeper. Carl got in; then cried out, "Good night. Alice, you'll come to see me; you too, Robin, and the boys?"

"Yes, yes, Carl; poor fellow," replied his brother, wringing his hand.

The window of the carriage was pulled up, and it drove rapidly away down the street through the pouring rain and howling wind. Robin returned slowly to his wife. She was crying over the fire.

"O, husband, what a Christmas guest! what a coming home!" cried she.

"Sad! Marston must have known of this,—I wonder why he never told us," replied Robin. "What did he say to you while I was out of the room with the doctor?"

"Nothing."

"Let us get to bed. Poor Carl! he is not in bad hands seemingly, but I'll go and see after him in a little while. It is like a dream, is it not? Come and gone already!"

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

The summer following Carl Branston's visit to his brother's house in London, was one of prolonged drought; the shrubs and flowers were shrivelled and burnt up, the earth yawned in thirsty cracks all over its surface. Robin had seen Carl twice, and had been convinced by what he himself observed, as well as by the doctor's arguments, that he could not be in kinder hands, and he left him where he had at first voluntarily placed himself. Having seen him, Robin was satisfied that his delusions were incurable, and by and by, happy in his own home, in his wife and his beautiful children, the remembrance of that awful visit ceased to weigh upon him.

As for Carl, when he passed out of the dusty arena of business life, his place was filled up, and he was forgotten, as much as if he was already dead. His money accumulated untouched; his fate had evolved itself step by step from the crime which his paroxysms of remorse continually betrayed. From that moment mists of vague dread confused him, then a twilight of distinct fears which made themselves ghastly shapes to his bodily eyes, and finally madness fell upon him.

It was on the seventeenth day of August

that he escaped a second time from the house in which he was guarded, and on this occasion he was more successful in eluding pursuit than he had previously been. Ten days elapsed and he had not been traced. It was known that he had money; it had never been withheld from him since his confinement; for he loved to enter into imaginary sales with his keepers, and would not be put off with anything but the gold which he had, so far as he was himself concerned, succeeded in turning into withered leaves.

On the twenty-seventh of August, then, the anniversary of his father's death, he towards nightfall entered a thick wood, a narrow bridle-path across one angle of which led towards an extensive flat of furze and ling-covered moor. The trees, closely planted, and still in their full summer foliage, excluded all but the rarest glimpses of sky. One may imagine this God-forgotten man wandering aimlessly forward in the gloomy silence, hungry and thirsty, trembling at the rustle of a leaf, hearing in his own muffled footsteps echoes of the pursuers' tread, and panting hastily on with many a backward glance along the blackening path. One may imagine him stumbling as his eyes rove from one of his phantom companions to another, cursing them under his breath, and then laughing insanely till the hushed woods thrill again—imagine it but faintly.

Presently he became aware of singular glares of light through openings between the trees, and patches on the ground. What could this appearance be? Not lightning, for moon and stars were shining overhead; the effect of these sudden breaks in the shadowy darkness of the undergrowth of bushes was wild in the extreme; to Carl Branston it may have seemed like the horrid approach to the mouth of hell. Soon night was changed into hideous and lurid day; the stars paled before its glare; a low hiss, like laughter of triumphant fiends, seemed to move the air all around him, and hot, quick breaths waft against his face. He must have now lost all the faint glimmer of sense which had directed his wanderings hitherto, or what met his view on coming to the verge of the wood might have been comprehended, and its danger avoided. The furze and ling were on fire throughout an immense tract, the excessive dryness of everything causing them to burn with marvellous swiftness. To Carl it was only a continuation of his awful fancies, no more real or unreal than they. He was bewildered, mazed, lost!

Straight on he ran. No visible outlet; he turned; the fire had crept behind him, and was rushing for the wood. To the right; to the left; the flame was there before him,—no escape! He was literally hemmed in within a momently narrowing circle; the red tongues came leaping and dancing over the furze, leaving black smoking desolation in their track, straight towards him!

O calm summer night! what a scene was this on which you looked down! What horrible despair! What deadly fear! Went there up no prayer from that doomed and miserable man in his extremity? No cry for mercy or pardon,—no outbreak of repentance? That is your secret and heaven's. His hour of reckoning came to him then, and such as his account stood it must have been given in to the just Judge who, sooner or later, brings every man's sin home to him.

Carl Branston's wretched remains were found and identified not many days after.

The Doctor from whose house he had escaped, brought the news of the catastrophe to Robin and his wife. With the former and Mr. Marston he had a long private conference. The disclosures and explanations then given and received, never transpired further; even Alice was not permitted to share them; but that they were of a dark and awful character she might conjecture from the fact that notwithstanding the vast accumulated fortune that Carl left behind him, her husband still continued a poor and hard-working man. Some years later, when their children's education became expensive, and money would have been of solid benefit to them, she ventured to ask how the property had been applied and why it was diverted from them? For the first time in his life, Robin spoke briefly and sternly to her: "Alice, if my children were barefoot, and wanting bread, not one sixpence of Carl's money should go to relieve them," he said.

In process of time, however, fortune turned a more lightsome countenance on Robin's home, and though not likely ever to be rich, necessity ceased to press upon him. His boys grew up fine, intelligent, honest men, and made themselves a way in the world both honourable and famous: thanks to the strong, upright principles and straightforward system of conduct in which Alice and he had trained them.

The love of money is the root of all evil, was a proverb impressed on them very early in life. Though in perfect ignorance of the reason, the lads say to this day that their father was the only man they ever knew who had an unfeigned and undisguised abhorrence of money.

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THE FIRST VIGILANCE COMMITTEES.

On one of my hunting excursions in California, in the month of November, eighteen hundred and fifty, I came, by mere chance, upon eight houses situated on the extreme point of a little peninsula far projecting into the Bay of San Francisco. The place was some twenty miles distant from the town, and separated from the surrounding country by a rocky mountainous range and a deep creek. The houses, exceedingly narrow and tall, and without any foundations, were constructed of beams and planks, and leant two and two against each other that they might the more effectually resist the heavy gales. Each pair of them was separated from the other by a distance of one hundred and fifty yards, to secure them from a general conflagration. The buildings were all uniformly alike, each of them being of two storeys, and each storey containing one single room. Of chimneys, and such superfluous luxuries, of course there were none: even the windows were without glass, and the upper rooms without stairs.

In spite of the latest map of the mining district and Bay of San Francisco, in which this place was set down as a flourishing town, only one of the eight houses was inhabited, and its inhabitants were three Irishmen. As the position was tolerably convenient for my future hunting expeditions, I made up my mind at once, and chose a couple of the houses for my temporary residence. The Irishmen pretended to have some—I do not know what—right to all the buildings. But these pretensions proved to be utterly unfounded, as they had taken possession of the first house just in the same way as I was doing then with respect to the second and third houses. Nor did I ever find out who the real proprietors were.

Some days after my installation, the Irish party was increased by two countrymen of theirs, who, as they probably had private reasons for concealing their true names, were called Blue Jacket and Crow's Head. My neighbours professed to be fishermen. Very soon, however, I learned that they were carrying on the much nobler trade—at least, according to Californian notions—of cattle-stealing. They would have prospered, but that they unfortunately were too patriotic. Far from home, as they were in California, they devoted still nearly all their time and energy to the sacred cause of their native country, by telling, and sometimes even believing, the most startling exploits done in Ireland. In consequence of their excessive patriotism they could not earn their living, although they had been clever enough to choose a very suitable and lucrative trade. In the month of January the Irish people left the place. Two of them went to the Sandwich Islands and Australia; Old Man and Crow's Head returned to the town, and Blue Jacket, always wandering, lived here and there where he could find a dinner or a shelter for the night.

After the departure of the Irishmen, however, the cattle were not safer than before. On the contrary, the robberies increased, both in extent and boldness. Crow's Head was generally suspected to have organised gangs of thieves in the town, and direct them to our peninsula—a suspicion which was only the more confirmed by his most constant companion.

"I say, sir," Blue Jacket said one day to me, "mistrust Crow's Head; he is as desperate as cunning, and certainly one of the most dangerous men in the whole country."

"And you are his aide-de-camp," I replied.

"I must confess, in some degree, I am," was his answer; "but confidence and good-companionship never can take place between us."

"And why not?"

"I seduced his sister."

"You shall marry her."

"She is dead."

"Did she die poor and miserable?"

"I believe she did so, poor soul," he said in an off-hand manner, and then, growing more serious, he continued: "Crow's Head, I am quite sure, has made up his mind to murder me. If I were a man of weak intellect, I would avoid him; but there can be no doubt, if I did so, he would find me out, and easily carry his purpose into execution, without even being suspected. 'Poor Blue Jacket,' he would say, 'is killed—but he was too inconsiderate, and I warned him more than once not to wander all about the country.' No; I will stick to him—I will watch not only all his actions but even his thoughts before he

himself is aware of them; only in this way I can escape my fate; and should he, notwithstanding all my precaution, kill me, all people would ask him, 'Crow's Head, who killed Blue Jacket—he was continually your companion?' Besides, as long as I can make Crow's Head believe that I am of any important use to him, he will spare my life."

These confidences were not calculated to inspire me with sympathy in respect either to Blue Jacket or Crow's Head. But, on the other hand, I was not particularly interested in preventing the cattle-stealing, as I then only possessed Old Cream, a mare of most capital intrinsic virtues, but of so shabby an appearance that, to a thief, she presented no temptation.

My next neighbours were seven Frenchmen, living together in a small cabin, on a place which they called Low Point. Six of them were deserters from French men-of-war, and had, for many previous years, tried all the varied fortunes of a vagrant life on the islands and shores of the Pacific Ocean. The eldest of them—and a very kind-hearted fellow, too—had even been, for a year or so, a regular pirate on a small scale. His three fellow pirates had been hanged. Now, the six mariners and a late trumpeter of the Parisian Garde Mobile were very harmless and honest fishermen, who worked hard all the day long, and got up little domestic concerts in their rare hours of recreation.

On the opposite side, and nearly at the same distance from my house, there was another French settlement of five fishermen. All these twelve fishermen owned nothing in the form of cattle except a goat, which, of course, was a most precious one, as it had come with its master from France round the Cape Horn. Its loss would have been felt as a public calamity in both colonies. But, as it always remained with its master, and accompanied him even in travelling, either by land or by sea, there was no great danger to be apprehended from the thieves. Had there not been persons more interested in checking the cattle-stealing than the Frenchmen and myself, the thieves would have been quite at their ease on our little peninsula.

But besides the hunting and fishing people there was also a regular farmer, called the Irish Captain, although he was neither Irish nor a captain. By birth he was a Dane, and by trade he had been all his whole life a farmer. The Irish Captain had a stock of cattle, and a very valuable one, too, as his oxen ploughed the land, and his cows produced milk. Both the oxen and cows were emigrants. Californian bullocks—oxen there were none—would not work in a plough, and the Californian cows defied all human industry to get milk from them. They would rather die than give milk to any one except their calves.

A little further in the interior, on the other side of the mountain-range, was the Cornelia Rancho, a Californian manor-house constructed of rough beams, and surrounded, instead of gardens and parks, by an immense extent of mud, on which pigs and dogs basked in the sun, and little black birds, in a most familiar manner, picked up the vermin from them. Señora Cornelia was a native grandee of California; a kind of duchess or marchioness. She claimed the right of property over four or five hundred square miles. Some thousand heads of cattle belonged still to her, although the herds had greatly diminished since the invasion of foreigners that had taken place after the discovery of gold. She looked very magnificent when she was in full dress, adorned with gold chains, pearls, and jewels, seated in a waggon at least as large as Gordon Cumming's African hunting waggon, now exhibited in Piccadilly, and slowly drawn by two bullocks and ten or sixteen mules over the country, unprovided with roads. But such occasions of great state were rather rare. In her house generally she wore an old broad-brimmed straw hat, her son's boots, a loose white shirt and a short petticoat of coarse red flannel. Besides her son, about twenty years of age, a Portuguese adventurer filled the place of prime-minister, and ruled over twenty or thirty Indian servants. But prince-hereditary, premier, and all the subordinate servants were of little service, since the aspect of the country had been so entirely altered. No one in the Cornelia Rancho was able to speak English, or, as it was called there, American, the only language for official and the common one for commercial business. Moreover, the population that had inhabited California before the annexation to the States, was commonly regarded as belonging to an inferior race, in consequence of which it was extremely difficult for them either to repel encroachments upon their property, or to assert their right in a court of law.

The Irish Captain was not slow in availing himself of the disadvantageous position under which Señora Cornelia was labouring. He proposed to her that he would take care of her cattle, and sell it at the best prices possible, on the condition that he should have one half of the money realised. Señora Cornelia held a long privy council, and then reluctantly accepted the proposal.

This done, the Irish Captain called a general meeting. In a very impressive speech he suggested a kind of covenant, by virtue of which each one was bound to take care of the property of his neighbours, and to withstand aggressions with armed force, if necessary.

The Frenchmen joined with all their hearts from mere love of excitement. So I alone could not have opposed the motion without endangering my position, even if I had been inclined to do so. But I had weighty reasons, too, for wishing that a kind of police should be established, not only for the benefit of the cattle; but also for my own personal security.

I was alone, and lodged, as I have before mentioned, just on the extreme point of the peninsula. All boats that went up or down the bay were obliged to double it, on which occasion it frequently happened that people came on shore, and made my house the object of repeated attacks, especially during night. To shoot me in my bed would have been a very easy task. The boards of which the walls were made had large crevices, and at all events would have proved an insufficient security against rifle-balls. Therefore I fastened a second range of planks round my bed, at the distance of about one foot from the wall, and filled up the intermediate space with sand. As a further precaution against cases of extreme danger, I constructed a powder-mine under the threshold, which I could set fire to any moment I should find it necessary to do so. But my greatest safeguard was a loose plank on the ground-floor. When I was beset by superior numbers, I could lift it up, and slip through an aperture into the room under the house. Thence I crept unobserved into the long, high grass which grew at the back of the house, and then, describing a wide circuit, I came behind the back of the besiegers, whence, sheltered by stones and holes, and sure of an easy retreat, I opened fire from my double-barrelled rifle.

Although I had hitherto always succeeded in victoriously repelling aggressors, my position had been sometimes very dangerous, and, at all events, it was by no means a pleasant night's entertainment after a hard day's work, to get up from my bed, and to move like a snake in the cold air and wet grass;—I would fain have it stopped, and the sooner the better.

Some days after the Irish Captain had succeeded as well in the public meetings as in the closet of the Cornelia Rancho, a boat laden with stolen beef was captured, and the cattle-thieves were taken prisoners, by the Frenchmen of Low Point. The thieves were tied, put under a boat turned upside down, and closely watched. Meanwhile, the heroes of the day kindled a large fire, and prepared out of the booty a real Homeric meal, on which they feasted, until early the next morning, when the prisoners were marched to San Francisco, and handed over to the civil authorities, by the Captain himself. He was rather elated by the first splendid success. But when the Frenchmen came next time to the town, they saw the supposed prisoners strut very majestically, in the best caballero attitude, on Long Wharf,—the principal market-place of San Francisco. As soon as the thieves observed the Frenchmen, they became so abusive to them, that the poor fellows were obliged to pull away their boats at full speed, without even selling the fish they came to dispose of. This news, when it reached our peninsula, produced general indignation against the magistrates in the town; and the excitement reached its highest pitch when it was known, next day, that in the previous night all the milk-cows of the Irish Captain had been butchered and carried away. A second general meeting was immediately held.

The Irish Captain made another very clever speech. It would be foolish, he said, to hope for redress of our griefs from the judicial authorities. To be convinced thereof we had only to look upon the way in which the cattle-stealing was carried on. A butcher, when short of meat, generally lent a small sum of money, say ten or fifteen dollars, to a native caballero, who, of course, gambled and lost all he possessed. The caballero would not have troubled himself about repaying his debt, but that he wished to get some more money from the butcher. When he came back to the latter to tell his misfortune, he found that his creditor was a very reasonable man. "If you have no money," the butcher said, "never mind, you may pay me in beef instead of dollars." The caballero accepted this liberal proposal, and the butcher provided him with a boat, some guns, ammunition, provisions, brandy, and some more dollars. So the caballero, accompanied by two or three friends, set out for the purpose of killing and carrying away any cattle they could get hold of. As they knew the country well, they generally succeeded in their enterprise, and their employer was provided with cheap meat. In case, however, they were taken prisoners, the butcher was bound by honour, and much more by interest, to support them. The butcher had his lawyer, and the lawyer had great influence with the magistrates. Generally speaking, the thieves were set at liberty the same day. If, however, the case were a more serious one, and the plaintiffs had powerful relations, then the butcher himself came forth, and his fellow-butchers, and their clients, and friends, and all that numerous class of people who had an interest in defeating the ends of justice. The authorities, if they did not connive at, were, at all events, too weak to withstand so powerful a force against them, and yielded—sometimes after the show of a mock trial.

With this introductory statement, the Irish Captain moved that the inhabitants of the peninsula should form themselves into a permanent committee, and take upon themselves all the duties of police and courts-martial. No suspected persons should be allowed to land. Thieves and other criminals should be tried before the committee, and, if found guilty, executed on the spot.

The Captain's motion was passed without opposition. This, our Committee of Vigilance, although one of the last in importance, was the first organised in California that I have ever heard of, and was called into action as early as the next night. At midnight, when I was asleep, I was aroused by the arrival of a large party on foot and on horseback. It was the Irish Captain with the Frenchmen from Low Point, who had received hints that a great

number of thieves were preparing for an expedition into our peninsula, in order to avenge the supposed injury the three cattle-stealers had sustained. I was summoned to my post. After this, the Captain and his followers proceeded to the second French settlement.

I must confess I was in no haste to dress. Go and fight for the cattle of the Irish Captain! I did not much like the idea. While I was thus musing, I heard the report of fire-arms. The cracks of discharged rifles, possess the particularly intoxicating power upon most men's minds that commonly is ascribed to the smell of gunpowder alone. In one moment I was out of the house, had locked the door, and had run up to the most prominent part of the mountain-range, in order to ascertain where the fight was going on. All had become silent again.

After I had been watching there for some time, I saw suddenly my house lighted up. Was it burning? No. There was a large fire kindled before the door, and some strange forms moved round it. I doubted not for a moment that these men were the vanguard of the expected army of thieves. I descended the hill in search of the Irish Captain. When I met him and his little army, I was informed that they had encountered no enemy, and that the shots I had heard were from their own guns. Then I told them what I had observed before my house. In a moment all were in marching order. I was dispatched with two men to fetch the boat, and so to cut off the retreat of the enemy, whom the Irish Captain, at the head of the main force, was to attack directly.

When, having dragged the boat high up in the sand, and taken away with me the oars and sail, I joined the main body of the army, I found that they had taken two prisoners. The Irish Captain was just fastening a rope round the neck of one of them, and the Portuguese Premier was busily engaged in fixing a beam to the corner of my house, which was intended to serve as the gibbet. The prospect of two human bodies hanging all night so near my bed, was not a cheerful one. Perhaps influenced by this feeling, I inquired if the prisoners, in so short a time, could have been tried and condemned? The Irish Captain, excited with brandy and vengeance, returned me a rather coarse rebuke for my troublesome question. "Read the testimonial of crime written in their faces," he exclaimed; "and if you, after having done so, can doubt any longer about their being thieves, you must be out of your senses."

In spite of so positive an assertion, I saw only two unhappy wretches, who had committed on former occasions probably more than one crime, but who were now too miserable to be dangerous. It was wholly repugnant to my feelings to permit the execution to take place on such slight grounds. I won over the Frenchman to my side, and then, being in the majority, I unfastened the ropes from the necks of the chosen victims, and pulled down the intended gallows.

The prisoners I locked up in one of the empty houses. The next morning, at eleven o'clock, they were still sleeping; and when I awoke them, "Sir," said the most communicative of the two, to me, "we slept delightfully in this comfortable mansion. For more than five months we have not had the opportunity of passing a single night under the shelter of a roof."

"And were you not afraid last night, when you had the rope round your neck?"

"No, sir," was the reply. "Death, with a clear conscience, is no misfortune. I was more afraid of being eaten by a grisly bear; as with respect to these ferocious beasts, I have not so good a conscience, being bent on hunting and killing them. In order to prevent the bears from approaching us during the night, we kindled that large fire."

At the distance of more than fifteen miles, there were no grisly bears to be found; and had my prisoners, by an unaccountable caprice of fate, encountered one of these beasts, they would not have dared to attack it with such a weapon as their only gun was, even if they had been as courageous as the proudest preux-chevalier of bygone ages. Therefore, it seemed to me very improbable that my interlocutor and his companion really were hunters.

"You are Sydney men?" I said to him.

"O yes, sir, we are. I lived six years a convict's life in Australia, and my friend eight. But I was innocent."

In consequence of such slang, my interlocutor was afterwards called the Pharisee. I ordered the prisoners to collect and bring to my house as much wood as they had burnt last night; and then, after having cautioned both not to return, lest they should place their lives in danger, I sent them away. The next morning, however, the Pharisee came again to my house. He wished to buy, for one real, provisions worth some hundred reals. I gave him what little I could spare.

"Now go," I said to him; "and do remember that it would be utter madness to return any more."

"Madness!" he exclaimed, with a sneer. "Madness! I have been much more mad than I should be in exposing myself to be hanged. 'It is impossible to love and be wise; for whosoever esteemeth too much amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom.' I did so, sir—I did so, and became the miserable wretch I am now.—But the will of God must be fulfilled," he added, after a pause, resuming his usual expression of devotion.

Certainly he was a strange fellow, and his quotation from Bacon's Essays struck me the more, as I had not, for a long time, heard any word that betrayed a better education than that essential for a common mercantile busi-

ness. Hoping that he would become more communicative, and tell me the adventures of his life, I invited the Pharisee to partake of my breakfast in my house. But he wished me, in a dry manner, good-bye, under the pretext that his companion was waiting for him on a barren rock in the bay.

The will of God, as the Pharisee called it, was fulfilled shortly afterwards. The same week, when I returned one evening from my hunting, I observed in the twilight a corpse hanging on a tree. On examining it more closely, I recognised the Pharisee, quite dead and stiff. Beside the Pharisee, I found two corpses more, the hands tied, and shot through the forehead. I could not doubt that regular executions were taking place; but never did I ask, and never was I told who were the judges or the executioners of the supposed criminals.

The state of personal safety in the neighbouring country was nearly the same as on our peninsula. The same causes had worked the same effects. Cattle-stealing was shamelessly carried on, and similar committees for hanging the thieves, either permanent or convocated for the purpose, had sprung up all around. Justice or injustice was dealt out at once, and severely; not by means of regularly established courts representing the whole nation, but by small bodies of the people. Sometimes, indeed, these bodies were very small. For instance, on the twenty-seventh of February there was a corpse found on the high road from San Francisco to the Pueblo San Jose, then the capital of the state. It was shot through the breast, and to the bottom button-hole of the jacket was a long piece of paper fastened—much of the same form as I had seen, when a boy, in my mother's larder, tied to large bottles of preserves, to indicate their contents. On this piece of paper was to be read, in very legible characters:

> I shot him because he stole my mule.
> John Andrew Anderson,
> Anderson Rancho, Santa Clara Valley.

I have altered the names, but the address was quite as full as this. Certainly, John Andrew Anderson was not a murderer; in his opinion, he had only administered justice. Since ten or twelve private men could do so, why not one?

Thieves and criminals in general were in California, as they probably are everywhere else, the least disposed set of men to become martyrs to their vocation, and retired for safety from the country to the larger towns. Popular justice, as it was called there, was in the more numerous communities not so easily administered as in the country; for the simple reason that five men will agree more readily than five hundred. And although five men were perfectly sufficient to hang a thief in a creek of the Chaster River, five hundred would have been too small a number to erect a gibbet on the Plazza of San Francisco or Sacramento city. Consequently, while men like the Irish Captain and John Andrew Anderson were so awfully expeditious in hanging and shooting the thieves, the criminals in the towns had only to deal with the cautious and mean-spirited magistrates.

Crimes in the towns increased rapidly. An actor was shot even on the stage, when performing his part—I believe, of King Lear. It was clear that some extraordinary measure must be had recourse to, since Judge Campbell, with his colleagues and subordinates, proved now as utterly unable to protect the townspeople, as they formerly had been inadequate to protect the country population. The same reasons which, a month before, the Irish Captain had propounded on our peninsula, were now debated in the newspapers and streets of the town. And here, too, they were not without effect. The population of the towns began to set aside laws and magistrates, and to administer a kind of justice of their own, similar to that in the country and diggings.

The executions in Sacramento city became soon very celebrated for the awful majesty of their law. On the Grands Jours, all day long, teams, horsemen, and pedestrians poured into the town from every direction; and thousands of miners and strangers from the country came in to witness the exciting scenes. In the evening the multitude, the committee, and the culprits were assembled on the Plazza round a large fire, the sentence was solemnly read, and then the criminals were hanged. The office of hangman was reserved as a post of honour for the most respectable citizen of the town in respect of wealth and standing in society. But he paid dearly for this honour. Two days after his first performance he was shot.

While Sacramento city followed the example of the other localities, San Francisco alone held up the laws and established authorities. San Francisco was not only the most populous town, but a considerable part of its inhabitants, as being wealthier than the people elsewhere, were less inclined to support any kind of revolutionary measures. They preferred debates in the town-hall and in the newspapers, to achievements in the streets and public places. Not that they were satisfied with their judges and lawyers. The Alta California, their acknowledged organ of the public press, declared openly: "If ever any country were cursed with that worst bane of society, irresponsible, incompetent, and corrupt judges, the community of California is the one so afflicted." But the upper classes were even more afraid of the excited multitudes than of daring thieves and corrupt judges. Not so the middle classes. The grocers, bakers, and —for they had themselves become the victims of thefts—the butchers, were fully confident in their own strength, and recom-

mended lynch-law in the most rigorous manner. "Except the extreme measure of hanging by the neck, nothing can disturb the culprits' equanimity." This phrase, from the Californian Herald, became their watchword. Meanwhile, the judges were grossly insulted in their public sittings by the populace. It became necessary to protect the judges in the courts and the criminals in the prisons by armed force. One evening an immense crowd gathered round the new country-prison and demanded peremptorily that a murderer should be given up to them. The militia at last yielded, and the crowd rushed into the prison. But the cells were empty. The jailors and prisoners had effected their escape through a back-door. Such scenes were repeated at short intervals.

While thus the excitement at San Francisco was daily increasing, it was suddenly announced in all the streets—in all the houses, but nobody could or would tell by what authority —that the upper classes, having yielded to the general wish, several thousands of the most respectable citizens, bankers, merchants, and mechanics, belonging to all nations, and even some citizens of the Celestial empire among them, had formed themselves into a Vigilance Committee. Shortly afterwards, large placards were fixed to the walls of the houses, containing the regulations under which the new committee was to administer justice in the town. The tolling of the bell of the monumental fire-engine house upon the Plazza, was the signal for the members to assemble fully armed.

The ninth of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, was as bright a day as in southern climates alone can be witnessed. The bay lay before me smooth and calm, reflecting like a mirror the sky and the mountains. Pelicans, swans, and an infinite number of minor aquatic birds moved to and fro. I was enjoying this scene, and preparing for a hunting excursion, when I observed Blue Jacket, whom I had not seen for a long time, hurrying down the mountain-range.

"Crow's Head is prisoner of the Vigilance Committee!" he exclaimed, when he had approached near enough to be heard, "and you must go immediately to town and try to save him."

While Blue Jacket was catching and saddling Old Cream, he told me that he would not much care for Crow's Head, only that he apprehended this most cunning of all criminals would contrive to get away even from the hands of the committee.

"In this case," Blue Jacket concluded, "he would kill me to a certainty if I had not done all that is possible to save him. I, of course, dare not present myself before the members of the committee, so you must go."

I rode to San Francisco. The bell was tolling from the engine-house, and an immense crowd was assembled before the committee-rooms. I tried to get access; but in vain. The house was closely watched, and the orders were strict. I asked then, if Crow's Head was to be executed? "There are three scoundrels who will be served right," was the answer. In the evening, the adjoining streets were lighted by torches. At last, two members of the committee came down stairs, and read the confessions of the culprits to a long list of crimes, committed under various names. "And the committee has passed sentence of death upon them," the orator added. A general approval was the answer. A priest was admitted to the convicts. About a quarter of an hour later, six or seven hundred members of the Vigilance Committee, three abreast, came forth from the committee-house. The procession, with the culprits handcuffed and pinioned, nearly in the centre, moved on to the Plazza; formed round the gallows a hollow square; and the execution took place. I recognised the stout figure and ghastly face of Crow's Head above the crowd, dangling in the air.

When the crowd had dispersed, there remained the excitement of joyous triumph through the town, and quantities of champagne and punch were drunk in the stores, which served for drawing-rooms to the merchants as well.

The next day the principal newspapers published the proceedings of the Vigilance Committee at full length, but without inserting the names of the judges.

From that night, the sovereign authority of the Vigilance Committee was established. The constituted authorities, however, did not discontinue such business as was left them. His Honour, Mayor Brenham, remained in office and issued a proclamation, desiring "all good citizens to withdraw from the Vigilance Committee, or associations of like character." Judge Campbell, of the Court of Sessions, held his assizes on the appointed days, and charged the grand jury, "that all those concerned in the illegal executions had been guilty of murder, or were participes criminis." Lawyers sued for habeas corpus on behalf of the prisoners in the hands of the committee, and in some instances even of the corpses of the executed, and the writs were granted or withheld according to the private opinions of the judges. His excellency, the governor of the state of California, Mr. Dougal, threatened it with the horrors of civil war. But all the proclamations of the governor, the mayors, and judges, as well as the writs of habeas corpus, remained of no effect.

In some instances, the constituted authorities and the Vigilance Committees even acted together. In Sacramento city, for instance, the regular court of assizes had pronounced the sentence of death upon three culprits, Thompson, Gibson, and Robinson. But Robinson was believed to be less guilty than the others, and the governor of the

state had suspended his execution. Almost immediately after the respite was known, a committee of citizens was formed, and was even acknowledged by the mayor of the town, Hardenburgh, who appeared before them, and requested to know if he was to leave the prisoners in the hands of the sheriff? When Thompson and Gibson were preparing for death, and the sheriff directed the judicial executions, the committee caused a third gallows to be erected on the same spot, and Robinson to be hanged. After the execution, his excellency the governor was hanged, too; but, fortunately for him, only in effigy.

Order seemed to be re-established. But this expectation, too, proved to be unfounded. Among the prisoners were three criminals, Mackenzie, Wittaker, and Mary Ann Hogan, who had made disclosures, so important, and, as it was believed, implicating so many persons of high standing, that the committee resolved to reserve the trial of this case to itself. Upon Mackenzie and Wittaker the sentence of death was passed, and the twenty-first of August was appointed for their execution.

Meanwhile, during the night before the execution, the governor of the states had obtained from Myron Norton, judge of the supreme court, a writ of habeas corpus which he placed in the hands of Sheriff Hays and Deputy Sheriff Copperton for immediate use. At half-past three o'clock in the morning, the governor, the two sheriffs, the mayor, city-marshal, and six police-officers entered clandestinely the room of the Vigilance Committee. The guards were surprised, and the two prisoners were hurried off in full speed to the county-jail. But now the bell from the engine-house began tolling, and the people and members of the committee moved in crowds towards the committee-house. When it was known that the prisoners were rescued, the indignant crowd rushed towards the prison in order to retake possession of the convicts. The prison, however, was well defended, and on its roof there were posted the magistrates concerned in the rescue, the police-force, and a body of well-armed citizens, ready to repel, from their advantageous position, any attack that should be made. Although much superior in numbers, the crowd dared not assail them. For two days the prison was besieged without effect. Then, the people became tired, and dispersed. When all hope of recapturing the prisoners seemed to be lost, on Sunday morning, the twenty-seventh of August, the bell of the Vigilance Committee tolled with unusual vivacity, and, at the same moment, a carriage and two splendid grey horses were seen dashing through the streets towards the committee-house. As the people poured out of the houses, it was directly known that some members of the committee had, by a daring and sudden attack, succeeded in recapturing the two prisoners from the county jail during the performance of divine service, and had conveyed them again into the prison of the Vigilance Committee. The excitement was immense, and in an incredibly short space of time fifteen thousand people were assembled before the committee-house, venting their approbation in wild shouts. Some minutes later, the two re-captured prisoners were hanged from the windows of the committee-room. It was, with much satisfaction, observed, that from the moment of capturing the prisoners in the county prison till their final execution, only seventeen minutes had elapsed. The public opinion and the press declared that the Vigilance Committee had redeemed their honour, and the only circumstance the Alta California found fault with was, that one or two of the committee very indecorously had appeared at the threshold of the window from which the poor wretches had the instant before passed into eternity, and seemed to recognise acquaintances among the populace: exhibiting very little reverence for the sacredness and solemnity of death.

Proclamations followed from all sides, but were nothing better than empty words. It was clear to the most partial eyes that the victory remained with the committee, and the unbecomingly clandestine way in which the highest authorities of the state had stooped to act, without success, betrayed too obviously their own consciousness of weakness. Arrived at the height of popularity and power, the Vigilance Committee acted wisely in desisting from further interference with the administration of criminal law. They acted wisely, too, in not dissolving. The whole organisation remained unaltered, and imparted to the office-holders as well as to the criminals the persuasion of the undeniable truth, that at any moment, when necessary, the committee could again repress crime and protect their members against either legal or illegal persecution in consequence of the duties they had performed. Even the preachers acknowledged from the pulpit that the Vigilance Committee had deserved great praise in delivering the country, at least for some time to come, from serious evils.

The annexation of California added to the United States a fertile country, with a mild climate, splendid harbours on the Pacific, and immense riches of gold. But, on the other hand, it established a nursery of atrocious crimes that were believed no longer to exist except among savages. This bane of human society was not confined to California alone. Hundreds of thousands of American citizens who had undergone the brutalising influence of Californian life, returned to their former homes; and if we read now of Missourimen scalping their fellow-citizens in Kansas, and parading the bloody scalps before an applauding populace, we may, not without great probability, suppose that there is some

connection between these scenes of horror and the barbarities committed in the diggings of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers.

KESTER'S EVIL EYE.

I.

In the cottage to the left hand of the forge at Harwood there lived, about five and twenty years ago, a man of the name of Christopher,—or, as the country-folks abbreviated it, Kester—Pateman. He had formerly held the post of village blacksmith and farrier, but had long since retired from the exercise of his craft. He was said to have the gift of the evil eye; not that he was a malicious man, but that involuntarily his look blighted whatever it fixed upon. Friend or enemy, his own children or aliens, it was all one; Kester's eye settled on them, and they withered away. No single thing prospered with him. The crops on his little farm were always either frosted, blighted, or miserably thin; or, if they were good and abundant, rain came after the corn was cut, and it lay out until it sprouted and rotted away; once he got it all stacked and the stack took fire; another time the grain was threshed out and stored up in safety, but the rats devoured a third of it. His cattle were the leanest in the country; his sheep died of disease; his children perished one by one as they grew up to manhood and womanhood; every horse he shod, fell lame before it had gone a mile. Kester was a miserable man; all the country avoided him as if he had got the plague.

Kester had one child left: a daughter, born long after the rest; she being the offspring of a young Irish girl whom he had chosen to marry in his old age. The Irish girl ran away soon after the child's birth, on the plea of having a husband in her own country whom she liked better.

Kester made no attempt to bring her back, but contented himself with spoiling Katie. Katie was not a bit like what his other children had been; she was her mother over again. Two wide-opened dark blue eyes, a white skin considerably freckled, black elf locks always in a tangle, a wide red mouth, and little teeth like pearls; a figure smart and lissome, and a step that lilted along as if it kept time to an inward tune, made of Katie a village beauty and a coquette.

The strangest thing of all was (so the people thought at least) that Kester's evil eye had no effect on Katie. She grew as strongly and bloomed as hardily, as the wild briar in the hedge-row. Everybody remembered the five children who were born to him by his first wife; how they pined from their cradle. They had a sickly hectic in their faces like their mother; while Katie's cheeks were red as a damask rose: they crept about home weary and ailing always, while Katie was away in the woods, nutting and bird-nesting like a boy. Kester could deny her nothing, and she grew up, to the wonder of the village, healthier, more wilful, and bonnier than any girl in the district.

II.

The blacksmith who had succeeded Kester Pateman at the village forge was a young man of herculean strength, and a wild character. He was more than suspected of a tenderness for the Squire's pheasants, but the gamekeeper had not yet been found bold enough to give him a night encounter in the woods; his name was Rob Mc'Lean; he had been a soldier, and was discharged with a good conduct pension, after ten years' service, and two wounds. He was Katie's first sweetheart. She was very proud to be seen walking with him in the green lane on Sunday nights; but it was more child's pride than anything else, for, when he began to talk about marrying, she laughed and said no, she was not for him, he was too old.

Jasper Linfoot, the miller's eldest son, next cast his eyes upon her, and followed her like her shadow for a month; but no—Katie did not fancy him, he was too ugly: he squinted, he had red hair, and his legs were not both of the same length. Then there was Peter Askew, the squire's huntsman, but he was a widower; and Phil Cressy, the gardener, but he was a goose; and Tom Carter—but Katie could never abide a tailor.

While Katie, very hard to please, was coquetting with her would-be lovers, perfectly safe and perfectly heart-free, Kester Pateman had settled all the time whom she should marry—Johnny Martin, and nobody else. Johnny was the only son of Martin, the squire's coachman, who had saved money. He was a simple young man, with lank hair, a meek expression of countenance, and some gift for expounding, which he practised to small select congregations in Pateman's barn every Sunday evening. When Kester announced his intention to his daughter, Katie pouted her red lips and tossed her head, saying with an accent of superlative contempt, "That Johnny!" But she answered neither yea nor nay to her father's words; and the next Sunday "that Johnny" came courting with a little basket of cabbages on his arm, as an offering to his belle.

Katie looked as if it would have done her heart good to fling them one after the other in his fat foolish face, but she restrained the impulse, and only said:

"I'll plant 'em out to-morrow, Johnny."

"Plant them out, Katie! Why they're to eat."

"Pigs?" asked Katie in innocent bewilderment. "We don't keep any."

"No, they're for you, Katie; they're the finest white-hearts."

"Hearts! Oh, Johnny, take 'em away directly; hearts!—I never saw a heart be-

fore," and she peeped into the basket with a face of horrified curiosity.

Now, Johnny had proclaimed that his affections had fallen on Katie because she was such a clever girl, and could do everything; but this exhibition of her talents by no means equalled his former impressions. He tried her again:

"Can't you cook, Katie? Did you never stuff and roast a heart for your father's dinner?"

"Oh, Johnny, and you putting up for the school-master's place; what wicked nonsense you are talking! Surely you've called at the Blue Cow by the way?"

Johnny at this monstrous insinuation broke out into a cold perspiration; he was the most abstemious of young men, and had a name in the village for every variety of excellence; and Katie was quite capable of telling her suspicions everywhere. He endeavoured to take her hand and to put his arm round her waist; but Katie brought her palm against his cheek with such hearty good will that he was fain to subside upon his chair in meek dismay.

"If you do that again, Johnny Martin, I'll tell my father," she cried; and, with an affectation of great anger, she bowled his cabbages out into the garden, and ordered him to march after them in double quick time. He took up his hat and obeyed her, casting on her, as he went, the most pitiful and expostulatory glances.

"Don't stop at the Blue Cow, Johnny; go straight home," she cried as he went out at the gate, and the defeated swain crept away quite dejected.

Katie returned into the house, and began to sleek her hair before the little glass by the kitchen fire, humming a tune all the time, and thinking how well she was rid of Johnny, when that worthy's voice sounded through the open window:

"I didn't stop at the Blue Cow, Katie." She turned smartly round with such a shrewish face that Johnny added, in haste to deprecate her wrath, "I left my basket, Katie; let me get it—it's in the corner.'

"At your peril set foot over the doorstone, Johnny!" Johnny's plump countenance instantly disappeared. She snatched up the basket, threw it after him, and then took a hearty fit of laughter to herself.

III.

It was the beginning of harvest; and, on the evening of the day after Johnny Martin's inauspicious courting visit, Kester Pateman and Katie were sitting on the wooden bench before the door, she knitting, and he bemoaning, when a party of Irish reapers, with their sickles in their hands, came up the lane. They stopped at the gate, and one of the men asked if Kester wanted hands for his corn?

"No, I see nae the use o' hands," replied the old man; "it'll all be spoilt."

It had been a splendid season, and Kester's little fields showed as rich and ripe a crop as any in the country; it was quite ready for cutting, and the weather was settled and favourable.

"But, father, you must have hands," said Katie, who had a most irreverent disbelief in the evil eye; "two reapers and a binder, with you and me, will get the crops in this week, and I'll overlook 'em for luck." Kester stopped two men and a lad, and bade the others go higher up the lane to Marshall's farm. "But where's the good of it, Katie?" he added. "You'd have had a tidy fortune but for me. Go into the barn, lads, you'll get your supper 'enow." The old man was very despondent; for he had just lost a fine calf, which he thought to sell at a good price. Katie bade him cheer up, and went indoors to set out the supper for the reapers. When it was ready, she called to them to come; three as Ragged Robins as ever might have served for scarecrows appeared at her bidding.

One of them was a tall fine young man, with a head well set on his shoulders, a roguish eye, and a very decided national tongue. He looked at Katie, and she at him; and, for the first time in her life, the girl's eyes fell, and her colour rose. Alick seemed slightly bashful too,—very slightly—for, after dropping his glance on his plate for a second, it followed Katie to and fro in the kitchen without intermission, until she went out into the garden again. Alick could see her through the branches of briar across the window, standing at the gate with her father, talking to Rob Mc'Lean, and he immediately conceived an intense dislike for that well-built son of Vulcan, with the scar across his forehead. Alick jumped to conclusions very quickly; he had fallen in love at first sight, and was ready to quarrel with any man who so much as looked at Katie.

Having made an end of his supper, he went out into the lane to his comrades, who were sitting under the hedge resting and munching lumps of bread and cheese,—Marshall's kitchen not being big enough to hold them all. Alick kept Katie at the gate in sight; and, though she seemed never to look his way, she knew perfectly well how he watched her; and moved, perhaps, by the natural spirit of coquetry, she marched with her knitting into the house, and shut herself up in her bedroom. It had a window looking on the lane, and Katie sat near it with her pins and stocking, peeping out sometimes to see how the evening went on, and whether there was promise of fine weather next day to cut the corn. Alick wandered off by-and-by. How should he know that tiny lattice in the bushy pear-tree was Katie's?

IV.

Alick, Kester, Katie, and the rest, were all in the fields next morning as soon as

the sun was up. The reaping began. Katie would bind for Alick; and, during the day, the two exchanged a good many sharp words. Rob M'Lean came to lend a hand in the afternoon, and the men soon found each other out; but Rob had a decided advantage over the other. "Was there ever such a wild Irishman, all tatters and rags, ever seen in the country-side before?" whispered Rob to Katie, as they sat under a tree, at four o'clock, eating the 'lowance that had been brought from the house; Katie gave Alick a sly glance, and said "No." And, as Alick overheard both question and answer, he vowed vengeance against Rob.

That night in the lane there was Jasper Linfoot and Phil Cressy; and Katie talked and laughed with both of them; and the next day she was gossiping with Peter Askew over the field-style; and in the evening Tom Carter brought her some shreds of scarlet cloth that she wanted to weave into a mat, and Katie chattered with him; and the next day Johnny Martin came with an offering of summer apples, which (Alick being there to see) were graciously accepted. So Johnny was heartened into staying half-an-hour, sighing and smiling spasmodically. Alick went out very wrathful. "So many rivals are too many for one man," thought he. And, all the following morning, he took no more notice of Katie than he did of Kester—I mean, he seemed not to take notice of her.

Katie was as cross as sticks, and pretended she was ill, and must go home. Home, accordingly, she went, and tangled her knitting horribly. She had not been there long, when Alick came in at the gate with a long face, holding his hand in a handkerchief all stained with blood. Up sprang Katie, the colour going out of her face with fright.

"You're hurt, Alick! O how have you done it? Let me see and bind it up."

"The least bit in creation, Miss Katie; but you're the best binder in the world, and it'll heal under your eyes," replied the wily Alick, uncovering the injured hand.

Katie got a sponge and water, and bathed it, and her pity fled.

"It's not much more than a scratch," said she; so Alick groaned miserably.

"Surely, Miss Katie, it's the hard heart you've got, for all your bonnie face," said he, reproachfully.

Katie blushed. Nobody else's compliments had ever had that pleasing effect before; and Alick suddenly took heart of grace, and said one or two more pretty things that did not seem to vex Katie very much. The dressing of the wound being done, Alick was obliged to go back to the field; carrying the 'lowance was an excuse for Katie to return too; so, leaving her ball to the mercy of the cat on the floor, she got the basket and stone bottle of beer ready, and followed Alick. The reapers said 'lowance was early that day, and her father found fault about it.

Alick's reflections were of a more cheerful turn now. "Too many rivals may be as good as none," he thought. Indeed, he had found out—who knows by what freemasonry?—that Katie liked nobody so well as him; and he turned his discovery to good account. Did she encourage Rob, or Jasper, or Peter, or Johnny, or any one of her many admirers, by word or smile, he devoted himself to Jennie, the pretty Irish girl, who was binding at Marshall's farm; and Katie's pillow could have testified that he had ample revenge.

Thus they went on till the last shock was in stack, and the Irish reapers began to travel north in search of fresh pastures. All went but Alick; and he, from his quick wit and sharp eye, had won favour with the Squire's head keeper, who retained him as one of his watchers.

Although he had arrived at Harwood a scarecrow of rags, who so trim and spruce now as Alick? Katie had a secret pride in his appearance, as, with his gun on his arm and his game-bag slung over his shoulder, he followed the Squire in the woods,—looking, as she thought, far the finer and handsomer gentleman. That Johnny's face had now become perfectly sickening to her, and none the less so because Kester would talk of their marriage; for the young man had been chosen village schoolmaster, with a salary of thirty pounds, a cottage and garden rent-free, and coals ad libitum; so that he had a home to take her to.

Katie was having a good cry one afternoon in the house by herself, over the thoughts of Johnny, when there came a knock to the door. She got up and opened it, expecting to see a neighbour come in for a gossip; but, instead, there stood Alick.

Directly he saw what she had been about he cried, "Who has been vexing thee, Katie? Only tell me,—tell me, Katie!" And a smile broke through her tears as she said, "O Alick, it's that Johnny!" And they looked in each other's faces and laughed.

What Alick said more, this tradition betrayeth not; but, whatever it was, Johnny's prospects of a wife were not increased thereby; and when Alick went away home to his cottage at the park gate, it was with a triumphant step and his curly head in the air; and Katie cried no more over her knitting that afternoon.

V.

Village gossip soon proclaimed the fact of Alick's visits to Kester Pateman's cottage; and amongst the first to hear of them was Johnny. He went and remonstrated with Katie, and threatened to tell her father. Katie's blood was up, and she dared him to tell at once. So Johnny did tell, and Kester bade Alick keep away. "Katie's for no Irish beggar, but for a decent Harwood lad," said he, surlily. "And you'll

come about my place no more, Sir Gamekeeper,—d'ye hear?"

Alick feigned obedience; but he and Katie met in the green lane on Sundays. There was a little gate from the pasture where Kester's cows were, into the wood; and often, at milking time, you might have seen Alick leaning over the gate, talking to Katie at her task; but, as the evenings grew cold and the cattle were brought up to the house, these meetings were less frequent; for Kester began to watch his daughter as a cat watches a mouse. He suspected her.

The neighbours noticed Katie become graver and paler, and shook their heads portentously. "She's fading, like the rest of them," they said; "she'll not see the spring. Kester's smitten her, poor man!"

And, by-and-by, Kester saw the change himself. When he did see it, his heart stopped beating. "Why, Katie, my bairn!" cried he, with fully awakened love and fear; "Katie, my bairn! Thou's not going off in a waste, like thy brothers and sisters?"

Katie was knitting by the firelight; and, as her needles went, her tears fell. "I don't know, father; but the neighbours say I look like it. I'm sick and ill——" And her tears flowed faster.

Kester kissed her, and went out in a black mood.

"Oh, what'll I do? What'll I do for thee, Katie, my bairn?" said he, aloud. "I'm fit to tear my eyes out o' my head! What have I done, that all goes ill with me?"

It happened that Alick was loitering about in the hope of a chance word with Katie, and he overheard Kester's lamentation.

"What's the matter, Master Pateman? Katie's not ill, is she?" he ventured to ask. Glad to unfold his misery to anybody, Kester told Alick of his daughter's changed looks, and what everybody attributed them to.

"Go to the wise man, 'Bram Rex, at Swinford, to-morrow: he's got a charm agen the Evil Eye," suggested Alick, in haste. "He'll tell you what to do: you may trust him."

Somewhat comforted, Kester re-entered the house. Alick went off to Swinford to prepare the sage for his visitor the next day.

VI.

"WHERE are you going, father?" Katie asked, the following morning, as her father came to breakfast dressed as if for church or market.

"I'm going to 'Bram Rex, Katie, to hear what he says about something. He's a wonderful wise man."

"Is it about the stacks, father? I'd fear none: all's right so far. Them Irish reapers brought you luck, I'm thinking."

"It's not about the corn, Katie,—but thee. I maun't lose thee, my bairn. Alick says 'Bram has a charm, and I'm going to get it for thee. I don't like thy white looks and thy crying."

Katie dropped her spoon, and smiled to herself as she stooped to pick it up again, with a face like a rose, which she was fain to hide by looking away through the window for ever so long.

After breakfast, Kester mounted his old grey mare, and went slowly to Swinford, very mournful, and much troubled in his mind. The village of Swinford was, by the river, seven miles from Harwood, and the high road ran along the bank, with a steep fall to the water, which was covered with hazel and low shrubs. "Wherefore shouldn't I fling myself in there, and save the poor bairn?" he said to himself, as he saw the river shining and glancing through the bushes. "But, after all," he added, "it will be as well to see old 'Bram Rex first, and hear what he's got to say to her. My poor bairn! Poor Katie!"

So he went forward to a small slated cottage at the entrance of the village, and knocked at the door.

"Come in," said a rough voice. Kester fastened his bridle to the paling of the garden, and entered.

The wise man was sitting in a large chair by the fireside, stirring a composition in a pan which had far more of the perfume of a poached hare than hell-broth, which the gossips said he was in the habit of making. 'Bram was an old man with a long beard, and the subtlest and most wily of smiles. He looked up at his visitor from under his brows cunningly and shrewdly, then motioned him to be seated by a wave of his hand. Kester was not here for the first time; many a half-crown had he paid 'Bram for prognostics touching the weather, information about lost articles, and charms for his cattle against disease, and his crops against blight; but he had never before felt such a perfect submission to the awful sage in the chair covered with cat's skins.

"I know your errand, Kester Pateman," said 'Bram, solemnly. "I have been working out the horoscope all night. It is a case of difficulty."

Kester was profoundly impressed by this prescience, and his poor old hands shook as he drew out his leathern purse, and said:

"'Bram, it's not money nor corn this time, it's my bairn Katie."

The sage nodded and echoed,

"Katie! I knew it."

"What must I give you? This?"

And Kester took out a gold piece, and laid it on the seemingly unconscious palm of 'Bram.

"Enough, Kester Pateman," replied he; "enough. Tell me what you want—your daughter is smitten——"

"Yes, 'Bram; but there was one told me you had a charm agen the Evil Eye. Would it save her? Will you sell it?" asked Kester, trembling all over with anxiety, and stretching out his feeble hands with the purse to 'Bram.

'Bram took the purse, but said severely:

"I do not sell, Kester Pateman—talk not of selling. Describe to me your child's symptoms, and be at peace."

The wise man had a voice of such preternatural depth that it really seemed as if his words were also of superior sagacity; Kester listened to him with the profoundest faith, and then gave a description of Katie's state—her pale cheeks, her stillness, and her crying. 'Bram shook his head.

"I don't say she'll die, Kester, and I can't say she'll live; but there's one chance, if you'll try it."

"I'll do anything, 'Bram—why I'd die for that bairn! You don't know how I love my Katie. What's the chance, 'Bram?"

"The stars will not be hurried, Kester Pateman; they have not spoken yet. Come and see."

The sage led the way into a second room, in the middle of which was a table whereon lay a sheet of paper with sundry figures and scrawls thereon.

"Look here," and 'Bram began to trace a line with his forefinger. "This is the girl's line of life. Mark it well, Kester Pateman."

Kester, dizzy with anxiety, fixed his eyes on it intently.

"Here is a man of battles; it passes him. This part shows them that seek her in matrimony; them that she must not marry, Kester—you mark me?"

Kester nodded his head.

"She must not marry any one of these with the cross agen 'em. Not this with the spade, nor the figure with the sack, nor him with the tailor's goose, nor yet this man leading of a horse, nor yet that one with the peaked cap and ferule—the stars have spoken agen 'em all."

Kester wiped his forehead, and said he saw that clearly enough.

"Mark me agen, Kester," pursued the sage, sinking his voice until it sounded as if it came up out of the toes of his boots; "mark well, for I can't show you it a second time. This is the sign of a powerful man who has come over the sea—he's got a sickle and a gun. The sickle means that he shall reap abundance o' corn, and live on the fat o' the land all his days, and the gun is a token that he's a brave man; and his face being to Katie's line o' life is a sign that he loves her, and that she has a thought for him. Are you hearkening, Kester?"

"Yes, 'Bram, I hear. Oh! but you are a knowledgeable man. These," following the first marks with his fingers, "are surely Rob M'Lean, and Jasper Linfoot, and here's Phil Cressy, and Peter Askew, and Tom Carter, and Johnny Martin——"

"Them's their names! None o' 'em must your Katie marry, the stars has otherwise bespoke for 'em. Do you know who this last is, Kester?"

"It maun be Alick, the wild Irish reaper; him that's at the Squire's now."

"Him it is, and no other! The interpretation thereof is just!" said 'Bram, emphatically, and he rolled up the sheet of paper.

Kester Pateman was greatly in awe of 'Bram, but he endeavoured to protest against the conclusion.

"'Bram, couldn't you bring forward another?" said he, hesitatingly.

"Can I alter the stars, Kester?" replied the sage in his sternest tone; "I do not make, or mend, or mar, I only read for the blind what is written. You must give your bairn Katie to Alick, or she'll die."

"O! I will—surely I will, 'Bram!" in great haste cried poor Kester. "He's honest if he's poor, and Katie'll not have a penny. Tell me, Kester, will I sell my corn well this time!"

"You shall," responded 'Bram; "you shall sell it as others do."

"Have you that charm agen the Evil Eye that one told me of, 'Bram?" Kester humbly inquired.

"Yes, Kester; but it is not to be bought with silver nor gold. Send me half a bushel of your best aits, and you shall have it. I've parted with a many, but I've only one on hand now, and it's a good one."

"Let me have it, 'Bram. You'll get the aits to-morn."

'Bram went to a drawer in the dresser, and, after rummaging for some minutes amongst its contents, he brought forth a hare's foot with a string attached to it. He smoothed it carefully with his hand, muttering a formula of words to himself as he did so.

"You must put this in your pillow, Kester, and every morning, the first thing when you get up, open the window, and fix on some particular tree or bush, and look at it steady while you spell your own name backwards three times. You must look every day fasting at the same thing, and in time it will wither away and die. And so you'll be cured, and in smiting the tree the rest o' your things 'll be safe."

Kester took the hare's foot as tenderly as if it had been a sacred relic, and put it in his bosom.

"Thank you, 'Bram—and you're sure Katie 'll be well if I let her wed Alick?"

"Yes, man! You'll find the lass's face shining when you get home, for she's feeling that your heart's changed towards her already. The stars has been whispering of it to her."

Quite cheerfully Kester trotted the grey mare home, and, as if immediately to prove the sage's words true, Katie came to meet him at the gate as rosy as a peony. Alick, at that minute, was escaping by the cow-house door into the pasture, after telling Katie of his visit to 'Bram Rex, and preparing her for its probable results.

VII.

In the centre of the great meadow directly opposite Kester Pateman's chamber window

there was a fine old oak tree, quite in the maturity of its years and strength. Under its wide-spreading branches a herd of cattle could shelter from the summer heat, and in its giant bole was timber enough to build a frigate almost. When Kester rose the morning after his visit to 'Bram Rex, he opened his window, and his eyes fell on this tree the first thing, as they had probably done for many a year. This time he gazed at it fixedly, half expecting to see the leaves and branches shrivel under his gaze; but he spelt his name backwards three times, and there were no visible effects. He went to market after breakfast and sold his corn, and bought a new cow; so implicit was his faith in 'Bram's charm; and, meeting Johnny Martin, told him ruefully, that he must leave off thinking of Katie; for she was not permitted to be his wife.

"Why not, Master Pateman?" demanded Johnny, to whom this sudden change was incomprehensible.

"Because thou's bespoken, Johnny, for another woman; and there'd be contradiction and the mischief and all if we tried to go agen what's ordained. I spoke to 'Bram Rex yesterday—it was he tell't me."

"'Bram Rex! the vagabond fortune-teller!" exclaimed Johnny, puffing out his fat cheeks in token of contempt, for Johnny pretended to more light than his neighbours. "Is that Katie's best reason, Kester Pateman?"

"Maybe not, man; she's no inkling that I've changed my mind yet. I 'ant spoken to her, but I maun."

"But it's not fair to jilt a poor fellow, because 'Bram Rex tells you a pack of lies," remonstrated Johnny. "I'll speak to Katie myself, with your leave, Master Pateman, and ask her her reasons."

"Her reasons, Johnny, is that she can't abide thee; thou's a good lad, but it goes agen the grain with her to think o' thee. She's a saucy lassie, and her that's bespoken you by the stars has a mint of money."

This happy invention of Kester's was uttered boldly as a consolation to the forsaken swain, and he, as such, accepted it. Johnny was as credulous as his neighbours.

In about a month after Kester Pateman's visit to 'Bram Rex there was a wedding at Harwood, and such a dance in Kester's barn as had never been heard of in the country-side before. All the defeated swains were there. Johnny Martin and Tom Carter made the music on two independent-minded violins, and lost, in this opportunity of distinguishing themselves, the sore sensation of disappointment. Johnny behaved nobly; he presented Katie with half a peck of apples as a wedding present, and looked glorious all night. When Katie came near him once he whispered,

"Katie, did you tell anybody about the Blue Cow?"

"No, man; it was only my fun," replied she mischievously; and Johnny drew a long breath of relief.

What a dance that was to the tune of Merrily danced the Quaker's wife and merrily danced the Quaker! It seemed as if it would never come to an end. So loud and hilarious was the mirth at the supper after it, that nobody heard the thunder rattling overhead, or saw, when all separated and went home, the lightning leaping about the hills. But there had been certainly a terrible storm that night, though few people at Harwood recollect it; and the next morning, when Kester opened his window, as his custom was, to give the charmed gaze at the oak tree in the meadow, behold! one side was reft entirely of its boughs, and a black scarred trunk faced him instead of yesterday's majestic growth. Kester started back affrighted. Could this be the effect of his Evil Eye?

If you ever go to Harwood, as you ride into the village, in the meadow opposite the blacksmith's forge you will see the blasted trunk of the giant oak tree; and, should curiosity prompt you to ask how it came to be destroyed, any gossip will tell you that one Kester Pateman withered it away by the power of the Evil Eye—he having gazed at it every morning, fasting, for that purpose. They will tell you also that, from having been one of the most unlucky of men, he became one of the most prosperous in the district, with grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and flocks and herds innumerable.

Alick and Katie still live in the farmhouse down by the water-pasture, which the Squire let them have when they were married. By dint of talking of it, they have come themselves to believe in the Evil Eye. 'Bram Rex's descendants live and flourish in various districts; though 'Bram himself, for some mistake respecting another person's property, was transported to a distant colony to exercise his craft there—with what success, this tradition sayeth not.

THE LIFE-SHORE.

Alone by my fire-side dreaming,
Counting Life's golden sands:
Counting the years on my fingers
Since my youth and I shook hands—
Since I stood, weak and weary,
On the shores of a troubled sea,
And my youth and its hopes went drifting
Down the ebb-tide, dark and dree—
Counting the years on my fingers
And looking along the shore,
Back to the spot where we parted,—
Parted for evermore,—
Many a precious footprint
Trace I upon the sands,
Hence to the shadow'd waters
Where my youth and I shook hands.

Wavering and slow at their outstart,
Oft halting and turning back,
Alone in the mournful journey,
Are the first steps on the track;

Looking away through the sea-mists—
Not at the stumbling feet,—
Are the tear-blind eyes of the wanderer
When she and Pale Sorrow meet.

Her passion is mute in this presence,
And low, with her face on her hands,
Keeps she a vigil of silence
Midst the wrecks on the storm-beat sands;
Till comes through the moonless darkness,
Wraith-like, unheard, and slow,
With trailing garments of mourning,
Patience, with heavenward brow.

She rises up from her weeping,
And looks o'er the sea again;
But night is low on the waters,
And her eyes may watch in vain.
Onward, by Patience guided,
Onward along the shore,
Leaving the wrecks unburied,
Unburied for evermore.

Peace comes in the morning twilight,
Strength comes in the later day,
And all these four together
Press forward upon the way.
Not without bitter struggle
Passes the noon-tide heat:
Turn'd back and check'd and baffled
Oft are her weary feet.

Could she but sit and rest her
One hour by the whitening wave,
And gather old dreams around her,
'Tis all that her heart would crave:
But, no! she must work and suffer
While the day is daylight still;
There is time for rest and idlesse
In the grave beyond the hill.

Quicksand and ghastly breakers
Are there on the forward-track:
"Go on," moans the tide advancing,
"No lingering, no looking back!"
Swifter, and ever swifter,
Comes the roll of the mighty flood,
And the waves of dark Time sweep over
The spot where late she stood.

A wide, black waste of water
Strewn o'er with spar and mast,
The wrecks that the currents carry
To the Present from the Past.
Across that heaving whirlpool
She may look and look again,
There is only mist and foaming,
Thick cloud and driving rain.
Dead Hopes, lost Love, lost Happiness,
Lie pale on the tempest sea—
Seed sown in youth for a harvest
That shall never gather'd be.

Forward, and ever forward,
Skirting the haggard rocks,
Where no glimmer of golden sunshine
The dull, grey silence mocks.
Footsore and lagging often,
Weary both heart and brain—
"Courage, faint heart, and forward!
Such travail is not in vain."

The heat of the day is over,
Twilight enshrouds the sky:
Gone back are the sullen waters,
Leaving the footprints dry.

Some faint on the deep-ribb'd sea-sand
In all their wandering maze,
When she and her heart went blindly
Through long, long aching days:
Some clear as if cut in marble,
Straight on the beaten strand;
Steady and true to their purpose,
Guided by angel hand.

Sitting alone by my fire-side,
Alone this October night,
Tracing a backward journey
By memory's pale moonlight,
Looking through Life's long vista
To its hours of golden sands,
And counting the years on my fingers
Since my youth and I shook hands—
Till bright in the far-off distance,
Like sun in a pictured scene,
As I round the hills of autumns,
The old spring-times are seen.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

THE CZAR'S HIGHWAY.

"Let me," said somebody who knew what he was saying, "write the ballads of a people, and he may write their history who will." If the Czar of all the Russias would only allow me to make his roads for him, the great problem of the way out of barbarism in his empire could be solved by a child. There is no such civiliser as a good road. With an imperfect highway disappear highwaymen, crawling beggars, dirty inns and extortionate charges, lazy habits, ignorance, and waste lands. Our shops, our horses' legs, our boots, our hearts, have all benefited by the introduction of Macadam; and the eighteen modern improvements mentioned by Sydney Smith can all be traced, directly or indirectly, to the time when it fortuitously occurred to the astute Scotchman (Where are his Life and Times, in twenty volumes?) to strew our path with pulverised granite. I am convinced that our American cousins would be much less addicted to bowie-kniving, revolvering, expectorating, gin-slinging, and cow-hiding the members of their legislature, if they would only substitute trim, level, hedge-lined highways for the vile corduroy roads and railway tracks thrown slovenly anyhow, like the clothes of a drunken man, across prairies, morasses, half-cleared forests, and dried-up water-courses, by means of which they accomplish their thousand-mile trips in search of dollars. What a dreadful, though delightful place was Paris when I knew it first!—foul gutters rolling their mud-cataracts between rows of palaces; suburban roads alternating between dust-heaps and sloughs of despond; and boulevards so badly paved, that the outpatienced population were continually tearing them up to make barricades with. There have been no émeutes in Paris since boulevards were macadamised. Much of the ribbonism, landlord-stalking from behind hedges, and Skibbereen starvation of Ireland, may be attributed to the baleful roads of

byegone days, which were full of holes, known as curiosities, and on which the milestones were so capriciously distributed, that whereas every squire (of the right way of thinking) had one on each side of his park-gates, unpopular localities, and villages where tithe-proctors dwelt were left without milestones altogether. Who was it that was chief of the staff to murderous Major-General Mismanagement in the Crimea? The hideous roads from Balaclava to the front. When the railway navvy took up the spade, the soldier's grave-digger laid his mattock down. What is it that impresses us mostly with the grandeur of the civilisation of that stern, strong people, who came to Britain with Cæsar, but the highways they made, whose foundations serve even now for our great thoroughfares, and which remain imperishable monuments of their wisdom and industry—the wonderful Roman roads. And flout nor scout me none for uttering truisms concerning roads in their relation to civilisation; for Paris is rapidly surpassing our vaunted London City in excellence of pavement. New Street, Covent Garden, is in a bad way; the Victoria Road, Kensington, leaves much to be desired; and the Commissioners of Turnpike Trusts, all over the country, want looking after sharply. There is need for us to have sermons on the better care of the stones. If we don't keep a bright look-out for our pavements, we shall infallibly retrograde—decay—as a nation; and M. Ledru Rollin will rejoice. If we are unmindful of the Queen's highway, we shall inevitably come to clip the Queen's English, and break the Queen's peace, and to the dark ages. It behoves us especially to be watchful, for our protectors never forget to collect the Queen's taxes, roads or no roads.

The Czar's highway, which is literally his—for everything in the empire, movable and immovable, animated and inanimated, is his own private and personal property*—is the worst highway that was ever seen.

The Czar's highway in his two metropolises, in his provinces and his country towns, from north to south—from Karlsgammen, in Lapland, to Saratchikovskaïa, in Astrakhan—is the most abominable—I can't call it a corduroy road, or a kidney-potato road, or a sharp-shingle road—the most miserable sackcloth-and-ashes road that was ever invented to delight self-mortifying pilgrims, to break postilions' constitutions, horses' backs, and travellers' hearts. There is the iron road, as all men know, from Petersburg to Pawlosky, and also from the northern capital to Moscow. This last is kept in order by an American company, and is a road; but you understand that there can be railways and railways, and even out of rails and sleepers can Czarish men make iron rods to scourge, and make a difficult Avernus to us, withal. From Petersburg to Warsaw there is a chaussée, or road, which, by a fiction as beautiful and fantastic as a poem by Mr. Tennyson, is said to be macadamised. It is rather O'Adamised; there is a great deal more Irish gammon than Scotch granite about it; but it is perpetually being re-mended at the express command of the emperor. When he travels over it, the highway is, I daresay, tolerable; for the autocrat being naturally born to have the best of everything, his subjects have an extraordinary genius for supplying him with the very best, and the very best it is for the time being. When the Czar is coming, rotting rows of cabins change into smiling villages, bare poles into flowering shrubs, rags into velvet gowns, Polyphemus becomes Narcissus; blind men see and lame men walk, so to speak. The Czar can turn anything except his satraps' hearts.

Of the provincial highways, and the vehicles that do roll upon them—kibitkas, telegas, and tarantasses, I shall have to speak hereafter. My object in this paper is to give some idea of the pavement of St. Petersburg, of which hitherto you have had but the glimpse of a notion in the words I have set down about ischvostchiks and concerning droschkies. I have come, by the way, on a new reading of the former multi-named individual. The correspondent of a Belgian newspaper calls him by the startling appellation of Ishwoschisky. I am not far from thinking that his real name must be Ishmael; for every man's (writing) hand is against him, and it is by no means uncommon for his hand to be against every man. There is a village in Carelia whose sons almost exclusively pursue the ischvostchik calling. There are a good many of them in St. Petersburg, where they have a high reputation as skilful drivers, and not quite so cheerful a renown for being all murderers. 'Gin an ischvostchik of this celebrated village meet with a drunken or a sleepy fare on a dark night, it is even betting that he will give the exact reading of the popular Scotch ditty, and make the fare into a "body" before he has long been coming through the ride.

Many persons endeavour to explain the badness of the St. Petersburg pavement by the severity of the climate, and the treacherous nature of the soil on which the city is built. The whole place is, it must be confessed, a double-dammed Amsterdam; and it has often been with feelings akin to horror that I have peeped into a hole on the magnificent Nevskoï, when the workmen were mending the pavement—which they are incessantly occupied in doing in some part of the street during the summer months. At a distance

* I remember once asking a Russian gentleman (not, however, with the slightest expectation of receiving a direct answer), the amount of the Imperial Civil List. He scarcely seemed to understand my question at first; but he replied, eventually, that his Majesty "affected to himself" a certain gigantic sum (I forget how many million silver roubles, for I am boldly bankrupt in statistics); but "Que voulez-vous," he added, "avec un Liste Civile? Tout appartient au Czar, et il prend ce qu'il veut!"

of perhaps two feet from the granite slabs of the footpath, or the hexagonal wooden blocks of the roadway, you see the ominous rotting of wooden logs and piles on which the whole city is built, and at a dreadfully short distance from them you see the WATER—not so muddy, not so slimy, but the real water of the Neva. St. Petersburg has been robbed from the river. Its palaces float, rather than stand. The Neva, like a haughty courtezan, bears the splendid sham upon her breast like a scarlet letter, or the costly gift of a lover she hates. She revolted in eighteen hundred and twenty-four, she revolted in 'thirty nine, she revolted in 'forty-two, and tried to wash the splendid stigma away in floods of passionate tears. She will cast it away from her some day, utterly and for ever. The city is an untenable position now, like Naples. It must go some day by the board. Isaac's church and Winter Palace; Peter the Great's hut and Alexander's monolith will be no more heard of, and will return to the Mud, their father, and the Ooze, their mother.

In the Nevskoï Perspective and the Two Morskaïas, violent efforts have been made for years past, in order to procure something like a decent pavement. There is a broad footway on either side, composed of large slabs; but their uncertain foundation causes them now to settle one way, now on the other, now to present a series of the most extraordinary angular undulations. It is as though you were walking on the sloping roofs of houses, which had sunk into the boggy soil up to frieze and architrave; and this delusion is aggravated by the bornes, or corner-posts set up to prevent carriages encroaching on the foot-pavement, which bornes, being little stumps of wood, just peering from the earth at every half-dozen yards, or so, look like the tops of lamp-posts. But the roof-scrambling effect is most impressive during the frequent occasions in the summer months, when the streets of St. Petersburg are illuminated. Most of the birthdays of the members of the Imperial family fall between May and August; and each scion of the illustrious house of Romanoff has an illumination to himself, by right of birth. You, who are yet fresh from the graphic and glowing description of the coronation illuminations at Moscow, by the Man who fought the Battle of England in the Crimea, better and more bravely than the whole brilliant staff who have been decorated with the order of the bath, and who would have gone there, for head-shaving purposes, long ago, if people had their due—doubtless, expect a very splendid account from me of illuminations at St. Petersburg. But it was my fortune to see Russia, not in its gala uniform, with its face washed, and all its orders on; but Russia in its shirt-sleeves (with its caftan off, leaving the vexed question of shirts or no shirts in abeyance, would perhaps be nearer the mark), Russia at-home, and not expecting visitors till September—Russia just recovering its breath, raw, bruised, exhausted, torn, begrimed from a long and bloody conflict.

The best illuminations, then, that met my gaze, were on the birth-night of the Empress mother, and consisted of an indefinite quantity of earthen pots, filled with train-oil, or fat, and furnished with wicks of tow. These being set alight were placed in rows along the pavement, one to each little wooden post, or borne. It was the antediluvian French system of lampions, in fact, smelling abominably, smoking suffocatingly, but making a brave blaze notwithstanding, and, in the almost interminable perspective of streets and quays, producing a very curious and ghostly effect. At midnight you could walk a hundred yards on the Nevskoï, without finding a single soul abroad to look at the illuminations: at midnight it was broad daylight. The windows were all blind and headless; what distant droschkies there may have been, made not the thought of a noise on the wooden pavement; and these rows of blinking, flaring grease-pots resting on the earth, led you to fancy that you were walking on the roofs of a city of the dead, illuminated by corpse-candles. Take no lame devil with you, though, good student, when you walk these paving-stone house-tops. Bid him unroof, and what will it avail you? There are no genial kitchens beneath, no meat-safes before whose wire-gauze out-works armies of rats sit down in silent hopeless siege; no cellars sacred to cats and old wine; no dust-bins, where ravens have their savings banks, and invest their little economies secretly. There is nothing beneath, but the cold, black ooze of the Neva, which refuses to divulge its secrets, even to devils—even to the worsest devil of all, the police. An eminently secretive river is the Neva. Its lips are locked with the ice-key for five months. It tells no tales of the dead men that find their way into it somehow—even when the frost is sharpest, and the ice thickest. Swiftly it carries its ugly secrets—swiftly, securely, with its remorseless current, to a friend in whom it can confide, and with whom it has done business before—the Gulf of Finland. Only, once a-year, when the ice breaks up, the Neva is taken in the fact, and murder will out.

As for the gas-lamps on the Czar's highway, they puzzle a stranger in Russia terribly. There is every element of civilisation in St. Petersburg, from Soyer's Relish to the magnetic telegraph; and, of course, the Nevskoï and the Morskaïas have their gas-lamps. They are handsome erections in bronze, real or sham, rich in mouldings and metallic foliage. On the quays, the lamp-posts assume a different form. They are great, wooden obelisks, like sentry-boxes that have grown too tall, and run to seed,

and they are bariolé, or smeared over in the most eccentric manner with alternate bars of black and white paint. In Western Europe, these inviting spaces would be very speedily covered with rainbow-hued placards relating to pills and plays and penny-newspapers, but I should like to see the bill-sticker bold enough to deface his Imperial Majesty's sentry-box lamp-posts, with his sheet of double-crown and his paste-brush! This is no place for the famous Paddy Clark, who, being charged before a magistrate at Bow Street, with the offence of defacing the august walls of Apsley House with a Reform placard, unblushingly avowed his guilt, and added that he would paste a bill on the Duke of Wellington's back, if he were paid for it. I am afraid that Mr. Clark would very soon be pasting bills beyond the Oural Mountains for the Siberian bears to read, if he were alive, and in Russia; or, that, if he escaped exile, he would swiftly discover that the Russian police have a way of posting bills on the backs of human houses very plain and legible to the view. They always print, too, in red ink. These black and white lamp-posts common, by the way, all over Russia, and whose simple and elegant scheme of embellishment is extended to the verst-posts, the sentry-boxes, and the custom-house huts at the frontiers and town-barriers, are an emanation from the genius of the beneficent but insane autocrat, Paul the First; their peculiar decoration is due to the same imperial maniac, who issued ukases concerning shoe-strings, cocked-hats, and ladies' muffs, and whose useful career was prematurely cut short in a certain frowning palace at St. Petersburg, of which I shall have to tell by-and-by. When I see these variegated erections, I understand what the meaning is of the mysterious American striped pig. This must have been his colour.* It must, in justice, be admitted, that though Paul was a roaring madman, there are other countries where the sentry-boxes, at least, are similarly smeared. I happened, lately, to traverse the whole breadth of the miserable kingdom of Hanover, coming from Hamburg; and for sixty miles the road-side walls, palings, and hedges, were painted in stripes of black and yellow—the national Hanoverian colours. I do not like thee Hanover, thee, thy king, nor coinage. The Hanoverian postmen wear a costume seedily imitative of our General Post-Office employés; but the scarlet is dingy and the black cockade a most miserable mushroom. It made me mad to see the letter-boxes, and custom-house walls, and railway vans all flourished over with the royal initials G. R. exactly in the fat, florid characters we have seen too much of at-home, and surmounted by a bad copy of the English crown. I thought we were well rid of the four Georges for good and all, and here was a fifth flourishing about to vex me. It may be that I looked at Hanover, its black and yellow posts, postmen, and king's initials with somewhat of a jaundiced eye; for I had to stop at Hanover three hours in the dead of night, waiting for the express train from Berlin, which was behind time, as usual, and crawled into the station at last, like an express funeral. There is the worst beer at Hanover—the worst cold veal, the worst waiter——but let me go back to the lamp-posts of Petersburg.

Bronze on the Nevskoï; striped sentry-boxes on the quays; for second-rate streets, such as the Galernaia-Oulitza, or Great Galley Street, the Podialskeskaia, or Street of the Barbers, more economical lamp-posts are provided, being simply great gibbets of rough wood, to which oil-lamps are hung in chains. There are other streets more remote from the centre of civilisation, or Nevskoï, which are obliged to be contented with ropes slung across from house to house, with an oil-lamp dangling in the middle (the old Reverbère plan); and there are a great many outlying streets which do without lamps all the year round. But oil, or gas, or neither, all the posts in Petersburg are lampless from the first of May to the first of August in every year. During those three months there is, meteorologically and officially, no night. It sometimes happens, as in this summer last past, that the days draw in much earlier than usual. Towards the end of last July, it was pitch-dark at eight o'clock, p. m. The government of the Double Eagle, however, does not condescend to notice these aberrations on the part of the clerk of the weather. The government night, as duly stamped and registered, and sanctified by Imperial ukases, does not commence till nine p. m. on the first of August; and then, but not a day or hour before, the lamps are lighted. To me, the first sign of gas in the Nevskoï, after returning from a weary journey, was a beacon of hope and cheerfulness; but the Russians welcome the gas back with dolorous faces and half-suppressed sighs. Gas is the precursor of the sleety, rainy, sopping autumn, with its fierce gusts of west wind; gas is the herald, the avant-courier, of the awful winter: of oven-like rooms, nose-biting outward temperature, frozen fish, frozen meat, frozen tears, frozen everything. Some Russians will tell you that the winter is the only time to enjoy St. Petersburg. Then there are balls, then Montagnès de Glace, then masquerades, then the Italian opera, then sleighing parties, then champagne suppers. With warm rooms and plenty of furs, who need mind the winter? But give a Russian a chance of leaving Russia, and see to whom he will give the preference—to the meanest mountebank at

* Did my reader ever notice the curious fancy that persons not quite right in their minds have for stripes and chequers, or at least for parallel lines? Martin von Butchell used to ride a striped pony. I saw a lunatic in Hanwell sit for hours counting and playing with the railings. Many insane persons are fascinated by a chess-board; and any one who has ever had a brain fever will remember the horrible attractions of a striped wall-paper.

a wooden theatre in Naples, or to Mademoiselle Bosio at the Balschoï-Theater here. The Russians have about the same liking for their winter as for their government. Both are very splendid; but it is uncommonly hard lines to bear either; and distance (the greater the better) lends wonderful enchantment to the view both of the frozen Neva and the frozen despotism.

A few of the great shops on the Nevskoï and the Morskaïas have an economical supply of gas-lamps, and there is a restaurant or two so lighted. Oil and camphine are, however, the rule, and both are extremely cheap; while, on the other hand, gas is—not so much from the scarcity of coal, but from the enormous expense of its transit—a very dear article of consumption. Some of the second-class shops have oil-lamps; with polished tin reflectors; but in the humbler underground chandlery shops, or lavkas, I have frequently found the only illumination to consist of a blazing pine torch, or a junk of well-tarred cable, stuck in a sconce. Rude, or altogether wanting in light, as these shops may be, there is always, even in the most miserable, a dainty lamp, frequently of silver, suspended by slender chains before the image of the joss, or saint.

In the year 'twenty-four, a French company, after an immense amount of petitioning, intriguing, and Tchinnovnik-bribing, obtained an authorisation from the government to light the whole of St. Petersburg with gas. They dug conduits into which the water broke; they laid down pipes which the workmen stole; they went so far as to construct a gasometer on a very large scale behind the cathedral of Kasan. They had lighted some hundred yards of the Nevskoï with gas, when a tremendous fire took place at their premises, and the gasometer exploded, with great havoc of life and property. From 'twenty-four to 'thirty-nine, a period of fifteen years, not a syllable was heard about the formation of a new gas company. Public opinion, for once, was stronger than bribery; for the ignorant and superstitious populace persisted in declaring that the destruction of the gasometer was a judgment from Heaven to punish the Fransouski-Labarki, the French dogs, for erecting their new-fangled and heretical building in the vicinage of our Lady of Kasan's most holy temple. I don't think that Siberia and the knout, even, would have been very efficacious in making the moujiks work with a will at building new premises for the offending pipes and meters. Gas is heretical; but the Russians are slightly more tolerant of some other institutions that exist to this day just behind and all around the most holy Kasan church, whose immediate neighbourhood enjoys an extended reputation as being the most infamous with respect to morality in St. Petersburg. Strange that it should be the same in the shadow of Westminster's twin towers, in the shameful little dens about the Parvis Notre Dame, in Paris; in the slums of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

The new gas company have not done much during the last sixteen years. In the suburbs there is scarcely any gas; and the gas itself is of very inferior quality—pale, and flickering, and grudgingly dealt out. I need not say that the lamps are placed as high up as possible. The professional thieves would extinguish them else, or the Russians would steal the gas—an act of dishonesty that, at first sight, seems impossible, but which, when you become better acquainted with my Sclavonic friends—with the exquisite art by which they contrive to steal the teeth out of your head, and the flannel jacket off your body, without your being aware of the subtraction—will appear quite facile and practicable. Gas in Russia! I little thought—writing the Secrets of the Gas in this journal three years ago, and vainly thinking that I knew them—that I should ever see a Russian or a Russian gas-lamp.

The huge open places, or Ploschads, like stony seas, into which the gaunt streets empty themselves, are uniformly paved with granitous stones, of which the shores of the Gulf of Finland furnish an inexhaustible supply. This pavement, if arranged with some slight regularity, would be in the early stage of progress towards tolerable walking space; but the foundations being utterly rotten, treacherous, and quicksandy, the unhappy paving-stones tumble about in a stodge of mud and sand; and the Ploschads are, consequently, almost incessantly under repair. This is especially the case in the month of April, at the time of the general thaw. Part of the pavement sinks down, and part is thrown up—the scoriæ of small mud volcanoes. Thousands of moujiks are immediately set to work, but to very little purpose. The ground does not begin to settle before May; and when I arrived in St. Petersburg, many of the streets were, for pedestrians, absolutely impassable. The immense parallel series of streets at Wassily-Ostrov—Linies, as they are called—and which are numbered from one to sixteen, as in America, were simply bogs, where you might drive, or wade, or stride through on stilts, but in which pedestrianism was a matter of hopeless impossibility. The government, or the municipality, or the police, or the Czar, had caused to be constructed along the centre of these Linies, gigantic causeways of wooden planking, each above a mile in length, perhaps, raised some two feet above the level of the mud, and along which the dreary processions of Petersburg pedestrians were enabled to pass. This was exceedingly commodious, as long as you merely wanted to walk for walking sake; but of course, wherever a perspective intersected the Linie, there was a break in the causeway, and then

you saw before you, without the slightest compromise in the way of step, a yawning abyss of multi-coloured mud. Into this you are entitled either to leap, and disappear like Edgar of Ravenswood, or to wallow in it à la pig, or to endeavour to clear it by a hop, step, and a jump. The best mode of proceeding, on the whole, is to hail a droschky or a moujik; and, like Lord Ullin, offer him, not a silver pound, but sundry copper copecks, to carry you across the muddy ferry; and this, again, may be obviated by your chartering an ischvostchik's vehicle in the first instance, and leaving the causeway to those who like leaping before they look.

The ground having become a little more solid, the pavement might naturally be expected to improve. So it does, on the Nevskoï; but, in the suburbs, the occupant of each house is expected to see to the proper state of repair of the pavement immediately before his dwelling. As the Russian householder is not precisely so much enamoured of his city and government as to make of his allotted space of street a sort of Tom Tidler's ground, with silver roubles and gold imperials, or to pave it with porphyry, Carrara marble, or even plain freestone, he ordinarily employs the cheapest and handiest materials that his economy or his convenience suggest. The result is a most astonishing paving salad, in which flints, shards and pebbles, shingles, potsherds, brickbats, mortar, plaster, broken bottles, and pure dirt are all amalgamated. The mosaic is original but trying to the temper—destructive to the boots and agonising to the corns.

On the Nevskoï, almost every variety of pavement has been successively tried; but with very indifferent success. From Macadam to India-rubber, each material has had its day. Asphalte was attempted, but failed miserably, cracking in winter and fairly melting in summer. Then longitudinal boards were laid down on the carriage ways, in imitation of the plank roads in the suburbs of New York. Finally, M. Gourieff introduced the hexagonal wooden pavement with which, in London, we are all acquainted. This, with continuous reparation, answers pretty well, taking into consideration that equality of surface seems utterly unattainable, that the knavish contractors supply blocks so rotten as to be worthless a few days after they are put down, and that the horses are continually slipping and frequently falling on the perilous highway. It is unpleasant, also, to be semi-asphyxiated each time you take your walks abroad, by the fumes of the infernal pitch-cauldrons, round which the moujik workmen gather, like witches.

The long and splendid lines of quays (unrivalled in magnificence of material, construction, and perspective in the whole world) are paved with really noble blocks of Finland granite. It is as melancholy as irritating to see the foul weeds growing at the kerbs; to be obliged to mount to them (they are some fourteen inches above the level of the road) by a wretched monticule of mud or dust like a vagrant's footway through a broken hedge; to mark how many of the enormous slabs are cracked right across; and how, at every six steps or so, a block has settled down below the level, so as to form the bed of a pool of foul water into which you splash.

Any one can comprehend, now, why every street in the Czar's gorgeous metropolis is a Via Dolorosa, and why there are so many thousand ischvostchiks in St. Petersburg. Looking-glass slipperiness in winter; unfordable mud in spring; simooms of dust in summer; lakes of sloppy horrors in autumn: these are the characteristics of the Czar's highway. I know impossibilities cannot be accomplished; I know the horrible climate can't be mended; but I have hopes of the pavement yet. There is a certain portion of the Balchoï Morskaïa which has, for about ten yards, a perfectly irreproachable pavement. The legend runs that the Czar Nicholas, of imperishable memory, slipped and fell on his august back hereabouts some years ago, and that he signified his wish to the inhabitants of that part of the Morskaïa to have the pavement improved, or to know the reason why. It was improved with electric celerity, and it has been a model pavement ever since. I am not the Czar Nicholas nor the Czar Alexander, nor a bridge and pavement engineer, nor a contractor for paving and lighting. I only point out the wrong, and leave it to others to suggest the remedy. But until the Czar's highway is improved, both intra and extra muros, so long will there be barbarism in the very heart of the Venice of the north. When Petersburg is well paved, then will the power of the stick decay, and the Tchinn no longer steal: but this is too much in the Nostradamus style of prophecy. When Russia has better roads, let us hope that there will be better people to travel on them, your humble servant included.

THE POOR MAN'S FISH.

While abundant golden crops have been ripening on the hills, a golden harvest no less abundant has been gathered by those who do business in great waters. "There has not been such shoals of fish for the last thirty years!" is the cry of the Cornish fisherman, upon whose coasts the pilchards have arrived in almost fabulous quantities.

A village on the sea-coast wakes up one morning to find itself very busy. One of the pilots on the look-out on the hill has made out what is of more value than a fleet of ships coming into port—namely, a dark red spot in the glassy surface of the sea. This is the first warning the fish give of their arrival

on the coast, and inexperienced eyes would overlook it, though perhaps they might perceive the fish leaping in another place, turning the water into a flashing sheet of silver. But the experienced eyes would have the best of it, for a better shoal is shown by colour, with perhaps one fish flashing out here and there, than is betrayed by the leaping or stoiting, as the fishermen call it, of a hundred.

In the first case, the fish lie dead—a steady shoal, so large and leisurely as not to be easily frightened by a boat sailing almost over it. The stoiting school are called skirmers, and consist only of a few hundred scattered fish with very few below the water.

Now, from their cellars on the sea-shore, sturdy arms are dragging forth nets and ropes and baskets in seemingly endless confusion. After a time, however, things sort themselves into their respective places in the three boats which belong to each seine. The largest contains the seine itself; the second is called the vollier, which follows the seine boat; while the third—a smaller one—contains the master seiner, or director of the whole, an experienced pilchard-fisher.

The general complement to each seine is eighteen men or thereabouts; who, besides their wages and allowance of eatables and drinkables, have a share in the fish caught; not a bad plan, as it ensures their best endeavours to catch all they can. Long after the other boats have been got ready you see the string of men staggering down with the seine, coiling it up in the boat until you begin to think there is no end to the net. It is not quite endless, but is about two hundred and forty fathoms in length and fifteen in depth, and being, moreover, heavily leaded, it is by no means an easy task to get it into the boat. As for the getting it out again, that is a different matter altogether, as you will learn presently.

When at length the mortal coil is all on board, the boats start. The seine boat pulls out about two or three miles, the vollier about a quarter of a mile closer in shore and a little astern of the other. The little boat skims about in search of a school in a favourable position where the bottom is clear of rocks. This office of dodging about and hanging near the fish gives this boat her name—the lurker. At some places on the coast men are stationed on the hills, who, by hallooing or telegraphing by significant gestures, point out the shoals to the boats.

But generally the master seiner does this work, and when he has found the fish, is to be seen signalling frantically with arms, legs, and hat, in a manner eccentric to the uninitiated, but quite intelligible to the crews of the two boats, which come creeping quietly up to their prey. Three men in the seine boat divest themselves of every strip of clothing, preparatory to shooting the seine when the signal is given. The vollier pulls up to the first boat and receives the rope which is attached to the end of the seine, and then ships its oars.

As soon as the master-mariner sees that all is ready, he dashes down his hat—if he is an exciteable man he generally dances on it too, but that is not a part of his duty. In a second the sturdy unencumbered three begin to heave over the net. The boat shoots ahead, and makes a wide circle round the shoal until it reaches the vollier again, when—in a well-managed shoot—the seine is all overboard.

It seems hardly possible—even to those who have seen it—that a seine should be shot in a time a little under five minutes, but so it is! Four minutes and a half is considered a good shoot, anything the other side of five minutes is reckoned clumsy. Of course the three men are very much exhausted, and do not recover from the fatigue for some few minutes afterwards, and one cannot wonder that—as it has sometimes happened—men should die in the boat after such immense exertion.

When the two ends of the seine have met, the vollier men lash them together with ropes for a short length, forming what is called the goose neck, which reduces the circle of the seine to a smaller compass. Looked at from above, the seine now looks like the outline of a common peg-top—the body of the top being represented by the line of corks in the circle of the seine, while the peg is formed by the aforesaid goose-neck. This done they attach grapnels to different points in the circumference, and then row ashore until the time comes for taking up the fish.

At about eleven at night—if there be no moon so much the better, for, at sea, it is never absolutely dark, and the fish are not so easily scared in the absence of light—the boats set out with a small net, entitled a tuck-sieve, which they cast inside the other and bring up to the surface, dipping the fish out in baskets and throwing them into the boats. The stop-seine is still left in the water until by successive tuckings it is emptied. If only a small quantity is believed to be caught, the stop-seine itself is hauled up; but, if otherwise, is not removed, as there would be a chance of breaking it, or if not that, at least, of having more fish ashore than could be bulked before they were spoilt.

The seine is, in fact, a salt-water pond to keep the fish fresh, and, in the case of a good haul, stops down two or three days. You can see it from the hill by the circle of corks and the glossy appearance of the sea around it, caused by the oil of the fish.

But this is only looking on the bright side of pilchard-fishing, for it has its dark side, too. Not to mention such accidents as the fish escaping, while the seine is being shot, or a huge marauding shark making breaches through and through the net, occasionally a heavy ground-swell sets in in the night, and

the net drags, and is torn to pieces on the rocks during the night. After such times as this the shore presents a busy scene, all available hands in the place are at work patching, letting-in pieces of spare net where the breach seems otherwise irreparable, or netting together the edges of less formidable rents. Hard work it is, too, to get the seine in trim to shoot again the same day, and harder still, when it is ready, to find the fish are gone or the weather too rough for fishing.

For many years seining has been a losing speculation, but formerly it was as great a mania as mining is now, in the same districts; but many successive years of failure damped the ardour of the adventurers, and seines were sold for a song. Many owners of seines, who sold them the beginning of this year, are lamenting their folly; and it is really hard that, after struggling patiently against loss so long, they should part with their nets just at the very time when the fishery begins to promise well again.

A seine with boats and all other belongings costs, when new, very little less than a thousand pounds; and when we come to think of repairs and wages (not to mention the expense of salting) the success must have been very great to make it a profitable speculation.

After the run of bad luck they have met with so long, it is no wonder that the number of seines has decreased; not that they are absolutely done away with, but were sold at nominal prices to little fishing villages which, in better seasons, could not afford to buy them. In one case, within the knowledge of the writer, one small sea-port, which formerly sent out nine seines, has now only two, and those in so dilapidated a state that the nets are always out of repair, and the boats so leaky, that the men are almost afraid to venture any distance in them.

If next year comes up to the promise of this, all these things will probably be set to rights; but the seines have now fallen into the hands of those who cannot run great risks in outlay on a speculation which has hitherto been a loss to them. Of course such men ought to gain a little, enough to reimburse themselves, at least; but we are not sorry to know that the greater part of the money gained, this year, will go to the poor fishermen who catch—and the fishermens' wives who salt—the fish to supply food, fire, and clothing for the coming winter.

When the fish are brought on shore, all the women in the town gather together—(good heavens! how their tongues go)—and set to work, bulking.

The fish are thrown down in the cellars—a square yard with sheds all round it—and the good ones picked out by boys and girls; who carry them to the bulkers. These have already prepared for their reception—a layer of salt under one of the sheds. The fish are placed in a row, with their heads outwards, and then comes another layer of salt, followed by another of fish, and so on, until the pile is about four or five feet high. The last layer is salt, so that nothing is seen of the fish when bulked, except their heads, which are always placed outwards. A great deal of neatness is shown in these heaps, they diminish gradually, as they rise from the floor, and the rounding of the corners is entrusted to the handiest women who bring the fish round, heads outward, with most architectural skill. The heaps are diminished as they rise, in order to prevent them from overbalancing and falling down.

In this state the fish are left for about four weeks, in the odour of anything but sanctity (except it be that sanctity which refuses the thirsty man a drain of beer, or a strain of music on Sundays). During this time, the oil is slowly exuded and caught in gutters which lead to pits in the floor, called train-pits, whence it is conveyed away to be sold,—no despicable part of the profit of pilchards, which contain an immense amount of oil. The poor people collect the entrails and scrapings of the fish, and melt them down, preserving the oil so obtained for winter consumption.

When the fish have lain their four weeks, their owners break bulk,—that is, take all the fish out of the salt, the best of which is laid by for next season (some of it is used sometimes three years, a hogshead of fish not consuming absolutely more than three bushels of salt), and the worthless part is sold for manure. The farmer comes in for a good share of dressing from the fisheries. Among the fish caught in the seine are often large numbers of scad, chad, &c., which, with the damaged pilchards, are carted off up the country to enrich the soil. The water, too, in which the fish are washed (the next process after breaking bulk) is very rich in salt and oil, and frequently used on the land.

When the washing is over, the fish are packed into hogsheads (which are ranged under the shed where the bulk stood), and round heads, or bucklers, being placed on each, they are submitted to the pressure of a rough lever. Holes (purposely left in the walls of the shed) receive the ends of long poles, which, passing across the bucklers, are weighed down at the other end with heavy stones, ready provided with iron hooks. After a time the leverage brings down the buckler level with the edge of the cask, whereupon a block of wood is placed under the lever, and when this further pressure has brought the fish still more closely together, the vacant space is filled up with fresh fish; and this is repeated until there is no room left.

After this the casks are headed up and shipped off to the Mediterranean, where the principal market is.

Pilchards thus prepared are called fumadoes,—a name they have retained since the days when they used to be smoke-dried, or, more probably they were so called by the foreign purchasers, who, never having visited Cornwall, supposed them to be so prepared. Among the fishermen they go by the name of fair maids,—evidently a corruption of fumades, as the sailors of the trading vessels would be sure to call them, with their usual ingenuity in Anglicising foreign languages.

There is a great scarcity in the market at present, and great is the desire of the different seine-companies to get their fish into the market first. However, as most of them were caught at about the same time, and will most probably be ready about the same time, too, the price will very soon fall. The southern coast will have a slight advantage, because the fish make their appearance there first, and then pass westward round Land's End and up the northern coast, and then turn back. The northern coast, however, gets the finer fish.

Immense numbers of pilchards have been caught this year already, not only by the seines, but by the driving boats, who do not bulk them, but sell them at once on the shore at the landing-place, or send them in carts to the towns inland. The seine-boats occasionally sell at the landing-place, too; the difference being, that in a couple of thousand bought of a driver, there may be a great number of inferior fish, —scads, and such like; while all those bought of a seine must be pilchards.

A seine is considered to make a good shot when it encloses somewhere about a couple or three hundred hogsheads, though more are frequently caught. There is a tradition that the seine of a gentleman called Rashleigh once brought up two thousand five hundred hogsheads at a catch! "But that," as our informant said, "was in the good old days of seining;" and we humbly suppose it was at that time, if it ever was. From the same source we learn that sixty thousand hogsheads have been taken off Cornwall in one season; but we believe it was when the fish used to visit the coast in winter as well as summer,—a habit of which, we grieve to say, they have broken themselves for some considerable period. This year, however, the fish seem getting back to the good old days of seining; for they are in finer condition, larger, more numerous, and closer inshore than they have been for thirty years: as is allowed on all sides.

They are very beautiful fish to look at,—not very large, but silvery bright, with a tinge of pink in the scales here and there, and with very large, lustrous, gold and black eyes. But, to add still more to their beauty (according to that very old proverb, Beauty is as beauty does), they are called the poor man's fish. Not only do the poor make a cheap and hearty meal off pilchards, but are clothed, and housed, and warmed by the money brought in by the fishery; and in every place where a few hundred hogsheads of pilchards have been caught and bulked, a few hundred pounds have found their way into the pockets of the poor.

So, at the end of the season, the little village on the sea coast, which (at the beginning of this paper) woke up to find itself very busy, goes to sleep again with the comfortable assurance that it has money enough in its pocket, not, perhaps—to eat, drink, and be merry withal, but at least to keep famine and cold from the door during the next winter, thanks to the poor man's fish.

WHERE I FOUND AN OWL'S NEST.

Immediately behind the city of Trebizond there arises a singular eminence: the Mount Mithrios of history, and the Boz Tépé (or grey hill) of the modern Turks. Its summit is considerably elevated above the level of the sea; but the great extent of its base diminishes its apparent height. Its surface is pretty generally covered by short grass, from which, here and there, huge masses of dark rock crop out, and from which numerous springs issue. Near the base, upon the seaward side, one of these masses forms the trapezoid site of the ancient citadel from which the place derives its name; and this site, having from time immemorial divided the water that constantly rushes down from above, and having forced it to find channels to the right and left, is now isolated between two deep and picturesque ravines, spanned by bridges for the traffic of the city, and through which trickling rills, changed sometimes into foaming torrents, find the end of their course in the waters of the Euxine. Lower still, between the ravines as they diverge, with the trapezoid rock rising perpendicularly behind it, and the sea washing its feet, stands the Turkish town—its lofty walls bearing witness to the revolutions of the past. Here, the perfection of the masonry tells of Roman handiwork; there, the fragment of a sculptured capital, or the shaft of a marble column, tells of repairs executed with relics that only barbarism could have so employed. Here, a stone of unusual size bears a time-worn Latin or Greek inscription; there, where a similar stone has been removed, the spectator may read, upon a substitute thrust loosely into its place, the exultation of a Mahometan victor, or a sentence selected from the Koran. Upon the beach, a modern battery exhibits unmistakeable evidence of the late Czar's sick man. Its embrasures are filled up at the back by wooden screens, much the colour of the masonry, and on each screen there is painted a black circle, intended to look like the muzzle of a gun, and to strike awe into the hearts of the

Giaours, whose steamers pass within range on their way to the roadstead. The ingenious dummy in question is placed under the care of two stolid-looking sentinels, each padded by as many garments of every description as his means will procure, or his shapeless uniform conceal, and each prone to ignore the duties of his part in favour of entomological researches upon the head of his companion. A little eastward, a tiny cape juts into the sea, forming a bay on either side. Between the walls and this cape, the remains of the mole of Hadrian still afford some shelter to small vessels engaged in fishing or in the coast trade — vessels with high triangular sterns and dragon figure-heads, built, doubtless, after the fashion of the Argo. They are hauled high and dry upon the shingle, soon after their arrival, by means of fixed capstans and rollers ; and they are then used as shops until the stores they bring are exhausted. Beyond the cape, ships of larger size find anchorage, which, although much exposed to wind and sea, is tolerably secure, the bottom being composed of tenacious clay. Upon the cape, and above each bay, extending itself round the foot of Mount Mithrios, eastward of the walls, is a well-built Christian quarter, containing much wealth, and a large and busy population. Perched high above the houses, and reached by a path only suitable for goats, is a ruined but once splendid monastery, dedicated to the native martyr Eugenios, who was slain upon its site during the persecution of Diocletian. Eugenios was opportunely remembered by Alexios Comnenus, when he erected Trebizond into an independent kingdom, requiring the supervision of a patron saint. A house within the mouldering walls still gives shelter to Greek priests, who live, in characteristic dirt and laziness, upon contributions which the sacredness of the locality enables them to extort from the faithful. Between the ruins and the suburb commences that famous road towards Erzeroum of which Dr. Sandwith has told the story. It is probably the only good road in Anatolia: it was commenced with vast intentions, and was executed at vast expense ; but its length is about two hundred yards.

Spending a little time at Trebizond in idleness, and too familiar with oriental cities to care much for the many features that it possesses in common with them all, I became tired of rambling in the narrow streets and crowded bazaars. I had inspected the few manufactures that are peculiar to the place ; had bought a pair of silver bracelets of the local pattern, from which no artisan will depart, and which differs from that of any neighbouring town ; had gossipped with various workmen, and had turned over the carpets, silks, and trinkets of the Persian merchants, at their lodgings in the fusty Khan. I had walked, as in duty bound, two miles along the beach, to visit the remains of the church of St. Sophia, founded by King Manuel in twelve hundred and sixty-three ; pronounced by Finlay to be one of the most interesting monuments of Byzantine architecture, sculpture, and painting, that time has spared ; and recently conjectured, by a travelled duke, to be full two thousand years old. Upon the steep and narrow tracks leading into the interior, riding was necessarily so slow as to be irksome, while the rugged beauty of the landscape was apt to be forgotten in its sameness, or obscured by the recollection of its causes. The azaleas, which covered every hill-side with their yellow blossoms, and filled the air with their fragrance ; the rhododendrons, of which the purple buds were just bursting into sight ; the fertile though neglected valleys, the harsh rocks, the wild ravines, the mountain rivulets, although well calculated to excite admiration, were insufficient to maintain it. Through them all, when the eye had once drunk in its fill of delight, appeared signs of the poverty, the misery, and the oppression, that misgovernment has wrought in the land. Untilled farms conveyed the brief history of many whose corn was stolen by the pasha for the army ; whose horses, stolen to convey the corn, had left their carcasses at Erzeroum or in Mingrelia, and whose families, if they escaped starvation, escaped it only through charity, or by a miracle. Deserted cottages were once the homes of men from whom the madir, or village governor, had wrung such sums of money—under pretence of saving them from the conscription—that the cow, or the field, or the stock of winter provision, was sold to meet his demands ; and the stripped victims went to Constantinople to seek work as porters or as boatmen. Branded with such signs of the hard lot of the inhabitants, the country around Trebizond is scarcely pleasing ; and I found that my excursions were little calculated to beguile the tedium of my necessary stay.

Under these circumstances, it was natural to hail with pleasure any new object of apparent interest. On the east side of Mount Mithrios, at a considerable height, the regular slope of the descent had been broken by an ancient landslip, which left exposed a perpendicular wall of rock, perhaps a hundred feet in height. Upon the face of this rock could be plainly seen, from a distance, the remains of galleries or excavations ; and of these I determined to procure a nearer view.

A walk of a mile from the town, brought me directly underneath my intended goal ; but left me still separated from it, by the mass of soil and rock that had fallen down. The incline was very steep, the ground soft and mostly planted with barley. Here and there, rock was so near the surface as to forbid attempts at cultivation ; and in such places I found little quarries, yielding stone for road-mending, or building, and worked by

men who had made themselves stone huts, without mortar, or cement, after the model of the oyster-shell grottoes, which prevail during August in the suburbs of London. These good folks had no sympathy with my desires. That a man who might sit at home, should climb a hill for amusement, was, in their eyes, incomprehensible; and one misanthropic personage pronounced my conduct to be "eshek gibi," i. e. like a donkey. Undeterred by his censure, I pushed on; and in due time reached the foot of the precipice. From there I could see that there were excavations of considerable size at various heights upon the rock; and that there had been galleries, or covered pathways, sloping from one excavation to another; and from the lowermost one to the ground. These paths were, of course, zig-zag, and had been cut with prodigious labour out of the perpendicular surface of stone. From the crumbling nature of this, from the effect of time, much had fallen down; but the remains led me to believe that the whole had originally been masked by the outer face of the precipice; and was only exposed by its decay. The lower portion of the path was altogether gone; and the commencement of what remained being fully twelve feet from the ground, I was compelled to defer any farther investigation.

The next morning I returned to the charge, attended by a man carrying a ladder. Its assistance enabled me to reach the pathway; along which I could walk easily to the lowest excavation. This proved to be a Greek chapel, about eight feet square, its stone roof and walls covered with plaster, and this with the usual pictures of saints—in very fair preservation. There was no outlet but by the way I came, and no apparent means of communication with the excavations higher up. But the pathway presented just one evidence of having formerly been covered; in the shape of an arch near the chapel, probably the sole remains of a once continuous roof and outer wall of rock. Moreover, the original termination upon the ground was easily traceable by the eye; and on proceeding to this point I found another little cave, and a well of excellent water; leading me to conjecture that the object of the path had been to open a communication with this well, rather than with the world without; and that the caverns had probably served as places of refuge and concealment for the early Christians, in times of persecution. Afterwards, they would doubtless be used as hermitages and chapels.

Besides the excavation which I entered, and which was about twenty-five feet from the ground, there were three others. Two of them were nearly in a line above the first; and there were signs that a pathway had once connected them with it, and with each other. The third was at some little distance away, about forty feet from the ground, and with no visible remains of any way of access. Its entrance was large and irregular, as if rock had fallen; and it seemed to contain three little vaulted chambers, giving its ground-plan somewhat the shape of a club on a playing card. Remains of painting could also be discerned from below; but nothing very definite. While wondering how the artist had ever reached the scene of his labours, I caught sight of some little hollows in the rock, like pigeon-holes, regularly arranged in a double row, and intended to receive the hands and feet in climbing. The lowermost one was above my reach; but it seemed likely that the series had once extended to the ground. As at present existing, not one of the holes would afford a fair inch of purchase; and I could not restrain a shiver as I thought of the number of hermits whose necks may have been broken in the endeavour to mount so perilous a ladder.

Returning once more to my accessible chapel, I stood awhile in its entrance to admire the view over the city and suburbs; and over the then tranquil waters of the Black Sea. I was startled by a succession of loud knocks, such as might have been produced by the knuckle upon a hard table. Comforted by the belief that spirit-rapping was unknown in Turkey, I turned into the chapel; and, in a gloomy corner, found three enormous owlets, seemingly of tender age, but with throats large enough to swallow me. Their beaks, rapping together, produced the noise that had discovered them; and displayed, I suppose, their manner of asking supplies from the old folks. To their infinite surprise, displeasure, and disgust, they were forthwith taken down the ladder; and then, to Trebizond, the outer garment of the ladder-carrier being extemporised into a bag for the occasion. The largest of them measured, when caught, nearly four feet across the wings; the other two being somewhat smaller. They throve very well under my care, and seemed amiable and docile; but their odour was so objectionable that on reaching England, I was forced to discard them, and to obtain them a home amongst their kindred in the gardens of the Zoological Society.

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"*Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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AMERICAN CHANGES OF NAMES.

WHILE the turbulent struggles of public life in the United States startle or astound the observer; while election riots, civil war, and bloody personal encounters shock the European sense of all that is stable and secure; there are small analogous traits in the quieter pursuits of the American mind that stamp it as the most unsteady of all human combinations. Among these, none is more striking and few are so absurd, independent of political or party versatility, as the mania for the changing of names; not merely of surnames—a thing rarely effected in England, and then only as a necessity, attended by the acquisition of property, by bequest, inheritance, or marriage,—but of christian names also, changed at will, and on the payment of a small fee; not always from dishonest designs, but often from mere caprice, good or bad taste, or love of variety—from any motive, in short, that might induce an individual elsewhere to change a house, a horse, or a picture.

This very common custom, besides leading to infinite confusion as to personal identity, the verification of facts, and the titles to property among a people so wandering, affords a painful illustration of the little real respect as yet generally prevalent among our cousins for family records or family associations.

In Europe, attachment to a family name is a sacred sentiment. If it has been rendered eminent by an individual, or even reputable by a succession of honest bearers, few would change it, even if they could. It may not be euphonious; yet we are endeared to it for the sake of those by whom it was borne before us. It may not be celebrated; but we hope to preserve it unsullied. It may have been disgraced; and, in that case, we resolve to redeem it from the stain. Even when its change for some other brings an increase of worldly wealth, we feel that the donor who has coupled his gift with the hard condition of displacing our own patronymic by his has "filched from us our good name," and we think that we pay a high price for our good fortune. In fact, it is only in very rare instances of some gross individual infamy, that families abandon their cognomen, except in compliance with the condition of some valuable bequest that forces the change upon an heir or a legatee.

But who in the (old) world would ever, under any circumstances, think of changing his christian name for any other whatever? Many an Englishman dislikes his familiar appellation, wishes his godfathers and godmothers had had more music in their names, or more forethought for his sensitiveness; but, however harsh or ignoble his christian name may be, he is usually satisfied with it, and cherishes it—even as a parent does an ugly child—in honour of old associations, and as a part of himself.

The general subject of the invention or adaptation of surnames in England is amusing, and instructive too. It has been calculated that there are, in existence among us, between twenty and thirty thousand surnames, derived from almost every possible combination of personal qualities, natural objects, occupations and pursuits, localities, and from mere caprice and fancy. But once established, they are handed down from generation to generation, with respect if not reverence; occasional changes in orthography taking place to hide their original meanness; or, as Camden says, "to mollify them ridiculously, lest their bearers should seeme villified by them." In America, however, these changes are not confined to slight alterations in spelling, but are adopted bodily and by wholesale.

Levity and conceit are the undoubted chief causes for this perpetual ringing of the changes on names. It would be scarcely possible, in most cases, to trace the custom to any reasonable or respectable motive. The changes themselves are, in the majority of instances, abundantly ludicrous; but the forwardness with which the commonest persons thrust themselves (by implication) into known and well-considered families, and endeavour to identify themselves with eminent individuals, is equally remarkable.

Here are a few examples from the yearly list published by the legislature of Massachusetts. I should like to have each individual's head subjected to a phrenological examination, to ascertain if it would bear out my notion of the respective characters of those name-changers. The following eight

would show, perhaps, a vain-glorious pride dashed with great effrontery:—

James Colbert takes the name of Colbert Mortimer; Caleb C. Woodman that of Emerson Mortimer; Hazan R. Fitz that of Hazan Wellington; Lyman Cook becomes Lyman Van Buren; Diodate G. Coon takes the name of Diodate Calhoun; John Pickard that of Daniel Webster; Noyes Coker that of Edward Byron; and John Lawrence that of George Washington.

Every one will understand the motives of such a choice—if choice was to be made—of names so gilded with historic and literary fame as those of Mortimer, Wellington, Washington, and Byron. But, many, many Englishmen are not aware that there are, or have recently been, in existence American political celebrities called Van Buren, Webster, and Calhoun.

The bump of patriotism must be lamentably deficient in those who abandon the peculiarly national prenomen for any other: as Jonathan Kimball Rogers, who takes that of John K. Rogers, and Jonathan Kendal that of Henry Kendall.

This is like giving up Yankee Doodle for Hail, Columbia! the former air smacking of vulgarity, and the other having a fine flavour.*

The romantic and lackadaisical developments must be strong in the following young ladies; several of them having abandoned their good old English name—not, be it observed, for the sake of a husband—but evidently under the inspiration of the last sixpenny novel; and, from

Sarah Robbins,	becoming	Adelaide Austin.
Eunicy Fellows	„	Caroline Follows.
Ruth Wedge	„	Sophronia Bradford.
Sarah Lombard	„	Amelia Livingstone.
Mary Carter	„	Aravilla Carter.
Judith Bray	„	Maria Bray.
Betsy Townsend	„	Malvina Townsend.
Sally Prescott	„	Phidelia Prescott.
Alice Hubbard	„	Alvina Calista Hubbard.
Nancy Tarbox	„	Almeda Taber.
Rachel Hawkes	„	Almira Aurelia Hawkes.
Martha Ames (of Saugus)	„	Sabrina Ames (of ditto).

Polly Woodcock drops a syllable, and becomes Polly Wood; and Alice Bottomly, from motives of delicacy, I presume, alters the spelling of her surname to Bothomlee.

But no particular taste for melody can have influenced the spinsters following:

Anna Maria Bean,	who becomes	Eliza Patch.
Valeria Pew	„	Mary Pew.
Serenetha Goodrich	„	Mary French.
Tryphen Van Buskirk	„	Frances Coffin.

* The very ordinary tune, Yankee Doodle, was adopted during the Revolution as the national air, from its having been played by a country fifer as a quick-step during the march of a small detachment of gallant countrymen to the fight of Bunker's Hill—a glorious title to distinction, and far superior to that of the composition which has superseded it among the fashionable society of America.

Miss Clara Frinck cannot be blamed for changing to Clarissa Wilson, or Abby Craw for becoming Abigail Sawtell. Triphena Moore, Derdamia Finney, Othealda Busk, and the Widow Naomi Luddington are unexceptionably elegant and need no change; yet changed they are to other as fanciful appellations. What could have induced Mrs. Betty Henderson (no second marriage giving cause) to change to Betty Grimes? Or where was the occult motive that influenced Philander Jacobs to change to Philander Forrest; Ossian Doolittle to Ossian Ashley; Jeduthan Calden to Albert Nelson; or Allan Smith to go to the very end of the alphabet and become Allan Izzard?

Under sundry unfathomable influences, Horace Fish and his wife Rhuhemah take the surname of Tremont; Curtis Squires that of Pomeroy Montague; William H. Carlton that of Augustus Carlton; Ingebor Janson that of Ingebor Anderson; George Hoskiss that of George Puffer. John Jumper shows good taste in becoming simple John Mason.

Daniel Ames merely changes a letter, and is Daniel Emes. Dr. Jacob Quackenbush, finding his name unwieldy, sinks a couple of syllables and the quack at the same time, and is transformed to Jacob Bush, M.D. Nathaniel Hopkins, betaking himself to rural life, I suppose, becomes Sylvanus Hopkins. But I cannot perceive what John Cogswell gains (except additional trouble) by inserting two more very unmusical monosyllables, and becoming John Beare Doane Cogswell.

I am sorry to perceive that some Irishmen have been infected by the epidemic; and, while renouncing their country, try to get rid of their national distinctions. For instance, Patrick Hughes changes to William Hughes; Timothy Leary changes to Theodore Lyman; Mason McLoughlin becomes Henry Mason; and six other persons of his name following his bad example, a whole branch of the family tree of the McLoughlins is lopped off.

As a pendant to this antinational picture, a group of five Bulls abandon the honest English patronymic of their common father, John, and degenerately change it to Webster.

A good excuse may exist for the family of Straw, the man of it, as well as his wife and seven children (Cynthia, Sophilia, Elvina, Diana, Sophronia, Phelista, and Orestus), for becoming so many Nileses; while another, called Death, petition (through a member named Graves), and are metamorphosed into Mr. and Mrs. and the Misses Dickenson. Masters Ashael G., Jothan P., and Abel S., their sons, also change from Death to Dickenson; but, strange to say, retain their villanous prenomens and unmeaning initials.

One Mr. Wormwood, with some fun in

him, asks to be allowed to change his name for some other; "certain," as he says, "that no member of taste will oppose his request."

Another individual, Alexander Hamilton, also petitions for leave to change, on the double ground of the inconvenient length of seven syllables in writing or speaking (a true go-a-head Yankee), and on his inability to "support the dignity of a name so famous in history!" It must be observed that this smart mechanic did not refer to the Conqueror of Darius, but to the greatest Alexander he had ever heard of, Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury to Washington; and I only hope (for the sake of American amour propre) that a portion of my readers may know who is meant.

To these instances of ever-shifting alterations, I may add one of a Miss Hogg who became Miss Howard; of another, a highly-estimable family, the Crowninshields of Marblehead, whose original name was Grunsel; and still another, the former Tinkers, who are the present Buckinghams. So much for them!

In looking at this scanty number of examples, and reflecting that such arbitrary changes are every year taking place over the whole extent of the Union to a very large amount, we may imagine, apart from the absurdity of the custom, the confusion and the mischief it occasions. Yet, however strange it appears to us, it is perhaps more wonderful that, considering the facility of the operation, it is not still oftener practised. A recent American paper tells us of a family in the town of Detroit, whose sons were named, One Stickney, Two Stickney, Three Stickney; and whose daughters were named, First Stickney, Second Stickney, &c. The three elder children of a family near home were named Joseph, And, Another; and it has been supposed that, should any more children have been born, they would have been named Also, Moreover, Nevertheless, and Notwithstanding. The parents of another family actually named their child Finis, supposing it was their last; but they happened afterwards to have a daughter and two sons, whom they called Addenda, Appendix and Supplement.

Whatever exaggeration there may possibly be in these last-quoted instances, there is certainly, in New England as well as in the less established parts of the Union, a curious taste for grotesque, though less startling, combination in names. In what degree fathers or godfathers are responsible for this, or whether existing individuals have capriciously altered their children's christian and surnames in the present generation, I cannot determine. It is equally puzzling to account, on either hypothesis, for such names as strike the eye on the shop-signs or door-plates, or in the newspapers of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and elsewhere. For instance: Apollo Munn, Quincy Tufts, Orlando Tomkins, Bea Tiffany, Polycretus Flag, Sylvester Almy, Peleg Sprague, Rufus Choate, Abiza Bigelow, Jabez Tarr, Asaph Bass, Azor Tabor, Hiram Shumway, Ransom Sperry, Nahum Capon, Elihu Amadon, Gigeon Links, Zichri Nash.

Gideon, Hephzibah, Hasiph, Gibeon, Uriah, Seth, Elnathan, Jeduthan, Virgil, Pliny, Horace, Homer, with Faith, Hope, Charity, and all the other virtues, are common prenomens all over the country. Many of these, while making us smile, recal associations Scriptural and classical, or of our own historic and puritanical absurdities; while some of the fancy names of America remind us of nothing. Mr. Preserved Fish was a well-known merchant of New York. Perhaps the most whimsical of all is that of a young lady of a country town in the state of Massachusetts, Miss Wealthy Titus. Attractive and auspicious compound! Pray Heaven she will change it, and that without losing a day, like her imperial namesake! And who knows but that every one of those eccentric appellations here recorded are, by this time (like Uncle Toby's oath), blotted out for ever!

However that may be in regard to individuals or families, the national nomenclature, as far as the names of places are concerned, gives a permanent proof that the Americans are at once a remarkably imitative and unimaginative people. In the immense catalogue of the names of counties, towns, and cities, there is hardly one they can claim as their own invention. They are all of foreign or Indian derivation. The inconceivable repetition of certain names of towns is, without joke, "confusion worse confounded." There are one hundred and eighteen towns and counties in the United States, called Washington. There are five Londons, one New London, and I don't know how many Londonderrys. Six towns called Paris; three Dresdens, four Viennas, fourteen Berlins, twenty-four Hanovers. There are twenty odd Richmonds, sixteen Bedfords, about a score of Brightons, nine Chathams, eleven Burlingtons, sixteen Delawares, fourteen Oxfords, as many Somersets, a dozen Cambridges, twenty-five Yorks and New Yorks, and other English names in proportion. There are twelve towns with the prefix of Big, four Great, and sixteen Little. There are nine Harmonys, double as many Concords (but no Melody); thirteen Freedoms, forty-four Libertys (and plenty of slavery). Twenty-one Columbias, seven Columbuses, and seventy-eight Unions. There are one hundred and four towns and counties of the colour Green, twenty-four Browns, twenty-six Oranges, and five Vermilions—all the hues of an autumnal forest; but they shrink from calling any of them Black, though they sometimes would make white appear so, especially in the Repudiating States. Fifteen

Goshens, eleven Canaans, thirty Salems, eleven Bethlehems, testify to the respect in which Scriptural names are held; while homage has been done to classic lands in sundry log-hut villages, some of them fast swelling in population and prosperity. "Ilium fuit" is belied by the existence of sixteen Troys. There are twelve Romes, and eight Athenses; but only one Romulus—and I have not had the good fortune to meet with any of the Athenians.

Many great writers have been honoured in these national baptisms. There are several Homers, Virgils, Drydens, and Addisons, a couple of Byrons, but not yet (nor likely to be in any sense) a Shakspeare. There are, however, five Avons, three Stratfords, a Romeo, a Juliet; besides, defying classification, four Scipios, six Sheffields, twelve Manchesters. There are one hundred and fifty towns and counties called New somethings, and only six Old anythings. The most desperate effort at invention is to be found in repetitions of Springfields, Bloomfields, and Greenfields. All the cities of the East are multiplied many times, with the exception of Constantinople, which does not figure in the list at all; but, in revenge, there is one Constantine. There are very few attempts at giving to Yankee humour a local habitation and a name. But I have discovered the funny title of Jim Henry attached to a soi-disant town in Miller County, State of Missouri; and I am sorry to perceive the stupid name of Smallpox fastened (not firmly, I hope) on one in Joe Davis County, Illinois.

The comparative popularity of public men may or may not be inferred from the number of times their names may be found on the maps. It is remarkable that there are ninety-one Jacksons, eighty-three Franklins, sixty-nine Jeffersons, thirty-four Lafayettes, fifty-eight Monroes, fifty Maddisons, fifty-nine Parrys, thirty-two Harrisons, twenty-seven Clintons, twenty-one Clays, sixteen Van Burens, fourteen Bentons; but there are only three Websters.

The indigenous fruits, shrubs, and trees give titles to many of the streets in cities and towns, but to few of the towns themselves. There is one Willow, a few Oaks (out of forty odd varieties of the forest king), and not one Persimmon, nor, as far as I can learn, a Pepperidge, one of the most beautiful of American trees.

A New York newspaper, writing on this subject, suggests the propriety of passing a law prohibiting the use of a name for a town or county that has ever been used before for the same purpose. But immediately recoils, like Fear in the Ode,

Even at the sound itself had made.

And well it might. For if the notion were followed up, new towns might be numbered, as streets often are at present, and some such arithmetical combination might occur as a letter addressed to

Mister Jonathan Snookinson,
Sixty-Fourth Street,
Forty-First City,
Nineteenth County,
State of Confusion.

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

A PARTY of young men were assembled at a bachelors' dinner. The more solid portions of the feast had been disposed of, with the gusto and enjoyment of youthful appetites in whom the pleasures of gourmandise were still fresh, and on whose digestion the results of its indulgence had not yet begun to tell, and the dessert was placed on the table.

"In heaven's name, Paul, do wake up, and don't be doing the skeleton at the feast! you hav'nt opened your mouth to speak, or eat, half-a-dozen times since we sat down. What the deuce ails you, old fellow, eh?" and the speaker—a very young man, with a broad, joyous face, in which the eyes and teeth that seemed to be always gleaming and laughing in concert, caught your attention to the exclusion of every other feature—clapped his neighbour on the shoulder, and, pressing his hand where he had placed it, waited with a questioning expression in his laughing glance.

Paul woke up, and slowly turned his large opened eyes vaguely and dreamily on his interlocutor, but without replying to his question.

"Reflecting on the brevity of his human life?—on the uncertainty of his destiny?—on——"

"Faith, your chance arrow has pretty near hit the mark!" said Paul, with a half contemptuous smile.

"Strange as are the time and place for such reflections, they were precisely what occupied me."

"Did they? then the case is a grave one,—an attack of metaphysics, with aggravated symptoms. What's to be done? where's my prescription?" and he poured a copious dose of burgundy into his friend's glass. Paul drank the wine, and replaced the glass on the table in silence.

"No better?—try it again." Paul shook his head, and pushed away the bottle.

"Never mind me, there's a good fellow, Hugh."

"But I do mind you," Hugh said, kindly. "I have been minding you for some time, and I'm sure there's something wrong. We'll talk about this another time."

And, with more tact than most people would have given him credit for, Hugh turned away, and, joining in the general tone of the party, left Paul to indulge undisturbed in his meditations.

In the centre of the table stood a silver basket filled with a variety of fruit, placed

there with at least as much view to effect as to consumption. Hugh, attempting to disengage a bunch of grapes, considerably disarranged the whole fabric, and a large, golden-rind fruit rolled to the side of Paul's plate.

"Significant!" laughed Hugh. "There's the means of solving your difficulties,—the forbidden fruit!*—eat it, and see what will come of it."

"The forbidden fruit!" The name sounded strangely suggestive in Paul's ears. He cut it languidly, half in jest half in earnest, as one trying an experiment of which his reason is ashamed, and tasted it; then he amused himself picking out the pips, and scattering them about his plate. When Hugh was looking the other way, he put two or three of them into his pocket; and, not very long after, the party broke up.

Paul was only twenty. A somewhat delicate constitution, an intensely imaginative and nervously excitable temperament, an intellectual organisation of the finest structure, and a love of the study of the abstruse and marvellous, were his predominant characteristics. The early death of his parents had left him free to follow the somewhat dangerous bent of his inclinations. He was, moreover, unfortunately for one so endowed, rich far beyond the usual extent of his expenditure; so that no wholesome necessity to labour, no occasion to strengthen himself by wrestling with the world, had taught him to brace his nerves, to gird himself, and acquit himself like a man.

The consequence was that Paul became an inveterate dreamer: discontented with a life, the secret and end of which he could only speculate on without solving; and, like most men and most women in similar cases, before learning that knowledge is not wisdom, he sought—instead of utilising the gift of existence, seeking out and performing the simple duties lying in his path, with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and leaving the rest to God,—to explain what man never has explained, does, or will explain while the flesh confines the spirit.

So Paul went down to the country and established himself all alone in the old place, that was his by right of ancient inheritance, and read all the mysterious books in the library, and wandered about day and night through the dimmest recesses of the woods and the ghostliest chambers of the mansion, and questioned heaven and earth why he was born, and for what he should live and die. And all the while God's sunshine and God's flowers and insects and God's birds that sung of love and praise in the boughs over his head; and God's labourers that worked in the broad fields by day and returned tranquil and contented to their cottage homes and wives and children at night, were whispering the answer; but other voices made a pining restless noise in his heart, and prevented his hearing it.

One day, when worn and haggard with study and speculation of the weary theme, he flung down his books and wandered into the beautiful conservatory into which the gloomy library opened. As he drew aside the heavy curtain that hung over the entrance, the burst of warmth and light and perfume, for a moment, almost overpowered his strained senses; then, as he became more used to the atmosphere, its delicious essence seemed to infuse itself into his young veins, and to quicken the sickly life within him. He walked about, looking at and smelling the flowers, and watching, with a sort of vague, idle pleasure, the gambols of the gold fish in the fountain. He sat down under a lofty rose-tree, whose fruity-scented blooms hung bending over him; a chill autumnal breeze stole through an open glass. The rose-tree shivered, and the odorous petals of one of the fullest blossoms showered sadly and silently over his head.

"The old story! birth, life, death—why, and for what?"

A peacock-butterfly settled on a heliotrope before his eyes. It heaved up and down its orbed and gorgeous wings, and he watched it admiringly; then it took its flight aloft among the fuchsia-bells that hung from the roof; and, while struggling and beating the painted down off its beautiful wings in striving to force its way through the glass, a spider rushed from its ambush and secured it, winding his crushing net round and round the trembling creature till it presented nothing but an unformed dingy mass.

Paul shrugged his shoulders and walked away. The odorous blossoms and yellow globes of a fine orange-tree attracted his wandering attention. Suddenly a recollection flashed across him—the forbidden fruit! Obeying a hasty and unreasoning impulse, he left the conservatory, sought and found the seeds he had preserved, and brought them down. He took a large flower-pot, filled it with a rich mould, planted the seeds in it, moistened the earth, and placed it in the sunniest spot. Then he went back to the library, he resumed his studies, and forgot all about his gardening.

A fortnight passed before Paul again visited the conservatory. Not a thought of the forbidden fruit had, during that time, entered his brain; and it was only when by chance the flower-pot caught his eye, that he remembered, not without a certain feeling of curiosity, his plantation. He approached, and saw, spreading themselves above the dark mould, two pale-green leaves. Paul took up the pot, and examined the poor little plant with a pleasure and interest he had never felt for the richest and finest productions that had developed their luxuriant beauties under the culture of other hands.

* A West Indian fruit somewhat resembling a very large lemon, called the shaddock, is, according to a tradition, the authority of which is unknown to us, supposed to be the forbidden fruit of Scripture.

"My work hath blood in it;" so it seemed to him. Something of his own blood—something of himself—appeared to belong to the frail little thing, with its inch of stem and two poor leaflets. He examined them long before he restored the pot to its sunny corner, and sprinkled the mould carefully with water from the fountain.

As every object we contemplate takes its colour from the bent and tendency of our individual mind, so this new subject of simple and wholesome interest became tinged in the mind of Paul with the wild, speculative, supernatural impression that pervaded it,—the forbidden fruit, that gave to the eater the knowledge of good and evil. This idea constantly haunted him in connection with the plant. Lately, he had taken much to the study of alchemy. He had even begun to attempt the concoction of some of the mysterious fluids that were, in certain combinations, to produce various magical results.

Now, all his ideas were turned in the one direction—that of nurturing the plant in such a way as would develop the mysterious power he felt persuaded lay dormant within it. So, night and day, he worked, and read, and studied, and experimented; trembling the while lest some fatal error might blast the frail life of the creature of his care.

Sometimes it waned and drooped, and then Paul hung over it, as over a sick child, on whose existence the happiness of his own depended. Then it reared its head and resumed its vigour, and he breathed freely and walked rejoicingly.

In time, the tiny plant grew and spread into a shrub, then expanded into a tree. During its growth Paul had several times transplanted it, so as to give space for its roots to extend; and Heaven only knows the terror and anxiety each of these operations had caused him. But it endured them all; and at last—at last—O height of joy and triumph! a flower-bud made its appearance on one of the branches; then a second, a third; and soon some score studded the boughs.

This was the decisive moment; on the treatment he now adopted—so his studies had taught him—depended the success or failure of all his hopes. In the composition of the strange and subtle essence that was to bring the tree to fruition, and endow the produce with the qualities he sought, such time, labour, and anxiety were expended, that he emerged from his laboratory haggard and ghastly as a spectre. But the essence was obtained according, he thought, to all the combinations necessary to ensure a happy result; and, with a hand trembling with hope, fear, and excitement, he poured on the roots the contents of the phial. A low shiver ran upwards from the stem to the top of the tree, the branches writhed for a moment, and then the buds fell in a shower to the ground!

Paul uttered a cry, and hid his face in his lean, clutching hands.

All then was over—the hope, the yearning, the labour of months upon months, destroyed in a single instant, and for ever. He could not look on the ruin; and, rushing back into his study, gave himself up to his despair.

But he could not keep long away from the tree—a fascination he found it impossible to resist gradually drew his footsteps back to it, and slowly and hopelessly he approached it once more. Its changed appearance, however, startled and thrilled him with astonishment, almost hope: it had grown suddenly into a richness and vigour that surpassed all it had ever before displayed; the leaves had increased in size, a fuller, deeper tint overspread them—nay, it even seemed to Paul that the stem and boughs had acquired greater volume. He drew nearer, examined closer, and beheld one bud, the first it had put forth, swelled and invigorated like the rest of the tree, firmly adhering to its stalk.

And now, on this tiny green globe, hung his all of hope and love and care on earth. A worm, a fly, a blight, a breath, might ruin him for ever; take from him in a second the sole interest his existence possessed. A chill blast in giving the tree air, a hot breath in administering the warmth necessary to bring it to maturity, might detach it from the stem, and involve it in the decay of its fellows. The interest grew terrible: the anxiety wearing beyond expression. Rest, properly speaking, Paul had none. He watched over the tree day and night to see that no danger should approach it, that the temperature which constant observation showed him best suited it, should never vary.

The few hours of sleep nature absolutely required of him were haunted with visions of destruction to the bud. Now a grub of fearful aspect, now a caterpillar with saw-like teeth, threatened its existence; now a fierce gleam of sunshine made it droop; a few drops of too cold water sickened it, and he woke up, trembling to examine it, and to prove to himself palpably that his terrors were all imaginary.

Slowly the bud grew and swelled and whitened; and at last, one summer night, as Paul woke from a troubled vision, he saw its petals gradually and with an imperceptible motion expanding in the pale ray of a slanting moonbeam directed on it, while a fragrance of such faint yet penetrating deliciousness, as steeped his whole being with a new and unknown sensation of pain and delight no words could render, filled the air.

By morning the flower was fully blown. For a week it remained in the same state, unchanged in aspect and odour, and during all that period Paul never absented himself beyond half an hour at a time; though the peculiar properties of the perfume kept such a strain, and exercised such an influence, on his nerves, as to threaten at times some startling crisis. When it began to lose its

dazzling purity and texture, decay asserted its powers, and one by one the petals faded, shrunk, and fell away, disclosing a tiny green fruit at the bottom of the calyx.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

Two years had gone by since the day when Paul had sown the seed that had produced the tree of the forbidden fruit. He was now two-and-twenty, but already had his youth passed away for ever. The pursuit of studies unfitted to the human brain; the concoction of essences composed for the greater part of deleterious substances, and compounded with a labour, an anxiety, and often an amount of failure and disappointment in themselves as destructive as the terrible processes the more material part of the work required; the want of rest, the overwhelming, engrossing weight of the one thought, the one interest, had wrecked his health and brought on him the infirmities of age, ere he had arrived at full manhood.

Hugh, and others of his friends, had, at various times, sought to recal him to himself, and to bring him back into the world he had left; but all their attempts were met with impatience and neglect; and, at last, he had succeeded in securing the void he sought to establish, in isolating himself from all human sympathy and interest. No love, no hate, no care entered his mind, for any living creature. To him the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, that agitate mankind were unknown; he had no smiles, no tears: he needed no one's love, no one's aid: he had neither love nor aid to offer to any one. To know was all he desired, and he fell down and worshipped the stock of a tree, as the representative of knowledge.

Meanwhile the farther the plant had advanced in its development, the slower had been the process of that development; and the ripening of the fruit was an operation of such intense tediousness, that Paul's reason seemed often on the point of giving way beneath the ceaseless and prolonged tension. But the thought — when it has arrived at its maturity, I have but to eat and to know; know all things, to know good and evil, to expound the riddle of the universe, to penetrate into the mysteries of the creation, that not all the sages of ancient or modern times could do more than guess at blunderingly; to learn the secret of my own destiny, and of the destiny of all mankind; to see why I was born, and what I am to do, and whither my spirit is to wend its flight!—this thought called back his sinking reason, and made him take patience till time should bring about the accomplishment of his desires.

Thus looking forward, he never looked back into the past that had been his, in which to train mind and body to their proper ends; to cultivate the heart, now dead within his breast, to surround himself with love, the "love of man made life of man that saves." He never, for a moment, cared to grasp the present that was yet all his own: he never even thought—strange! that let the future bring what knowledge it might, his forces, mental and physical, were so far spent by the unnatural stress they had undergone, that there was little chance of his being able to enjoy the prize he had wasted life to obtain.

None of these thoughts occupied him. To know was all he sought; the rest was swallowed up in the one burning desire.

By degrees, the great fruit grew and yellowed, and the bough that bore it bent beneath its weight; so that Paul had to prop it up, lest it should snap beneath its golden load. An odour, less rich, but more subtle, and in its nature and effects widely different from that of the blossom, began to emanate from it.

Instead of the intoxicating, dreamy, reveries that the flower's perfume had awakened in Paul's brain, this filled it with a strange dawning of lucidity. Things hitherto incomprehensible began to assume significance; isolated experiences became wonderfully connected, the missing links his former senses had failed to perceive, being supplied to complete the chain.

Hints gradually gaining clearness, the cause and nature and aim of the hidden mysteries of existence, suggested themselves to him; and, though he could only see in a glass darkly, every day that the fruit advanced towards maturity convinced him more and more that he had but to wait till it was fully ripe, to attain the sole hope and end of his existence.

The day came. Paul saw that the forbidden fruit had reached the culminating point, and that it was now fit to be plucked and eaten.

He had achieved the summit of his utmost hopes, his furthest ambition. Knowledge was there, within the grasp of his hand,—in another moment he would be master of the secret no mortal being had, until this day, possessed. He would stand above the angels of light and darkness. What, then, stayed his hand? Why, each time that he raised it, did it drop nerveless by his side? Why did he hesitate and tremble?

One more effort, and the fruit was plucked and was between his lips. He saw the past, the present, and the future laid out before him as God had ordained them, yet subject to the influence of his own free will. He saw the past as it might have been; not all bright, but strewn with many flowers that had only wanted the culture of his hand to yield him all their beauty and perfume. He saw the heart that a tender word, a kindly act of his, would have bound to him for ever. He saw the neglected work whose execution would have brought him fame, and esteem, and self-respect. He saw the pale phantom of the woman that would have worshipped, and tended, and clung round him; aiding, sup-

porting, encouraging him; doubling with her life his life, his strength and his energies. He saw the shadows of the children that would have climbed round his knees, supported him in age, and transmitted to posterity his honoured name.

He sat in the present himself, alone, utterly alone—a worn, worthless decrepit, useless being; shut out from all that makes life pleasant or valuable, or even endurable.

And beyond, what did he see in the future? Death, standing there at the very threshold, ready to bear him away: no respite, no time to exercise the gift he had thus purchased; none to retrieve the past, to utilise the present, even at the moment it was revealed by what means these might have been done.

Death he saw—and beyond this nothing; so far knowledge brought him, not one step farther. On the land that lay on the other side of the grave, her ray threw not a glimmer; all was impenetrable darkness! He felt the darkness extending to himself; dimming his vision, thickening his perceptions, closing him up in dull abstraction.

"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." That one sentence continually rung in his ears. The sense of all else was lost to him. Finally, that too ceased, and he lay dead at the foot of the tree of the forbidden fruit.

MINIMS.

Several distinguished instances have appeared during the past half century of the compatibility of music with optics. A coincidence exists even in the very number of the elements on which the respective sciences are founded; to wit, the seven notes of the gamut, and the seven prismatic colours into which an angular bit of glass dissects a ray of sunlight. Amongst distinguished amateurs who have been accomplished simultaneously in the arts that appeal to the ear and the eye, I will mention no other names than those of Kitchener, who went so far as to adapt a melody to bubble and squeak, and of Coddington, who was senior wrangler and an admirable harpist. All I want now is to point out the occurrence of a corresponding modification in musical art as influenced by modern musical instruments, and in the visual power attainable by man as developed by improved adaptations of perfected lenses.

In ancient music, a breve, that is to say a short note, was subdivided into two semibreves (its halves), and into four minims or least notes (the halves of semibreves), as the extreme of melodic rapidity. The giant of harmony never dreamt of urging his pace to perform the steps now executed by many-twinkling feet. A minim was the acknowledged ultimate subdivision of musical sound, as to its temporal duration, till crotchets were invented. Now, breves have gone the way of mammoths and megatheriums; a semibreve is a rarity, except when steadily held by the unfaltering voice of the immortal organ; but for ordinary composers, for popular ditties, for operas which take the town by storm and keep possession of it during their fleeting day, a minim, once the least, is now practically the longest extension of tone. It is parted and portioned out into crotchets, quavers, and semiquavers; while these again are subjected to subdivision, till they are chopped up and minced and pounded into double-demi-semiquavers and finer still—till they reach the infinitesimally small fractions of sound—the quick-darting grace-notes and flashing ornaments—in short, the musical animalcules and infusoria—which are the delight of modern throats and modern fingers.

While musical performers were practising hard to perform minim passages with proper agility, naturalists were straining their eyes to get a peep at their organised minims—mites and such like—beyond which they had little hopes of penetrating further and deeper into the mysteries of animated nature. A flea or a louse was to them a very small thing indeed to investigate in detail; an itch insect, or a parasite on another insect, was a material minim, or the least of the little. The discoverer of the circulation of the blood, never lived to see it circulate. Now, it is but a poor microscope which will not show the globules in blood; and their circulation—say in the web of a frog's foot—is a spectacle which it is far from difficult to exhibit, and that without serious hardship or injury to the frog itself. Our optical double-demi-semiquavers are creatures which give every evidence of their enjoyment of life; although ten thousand of them may take up no more room than that occupied by a grain of ordinary sand. A dab of ditch-water on a slip of glass is at this moment inviting me to throw down my pen, to admire the number and variety of its inhabitants. There are really minims and minimissimums—all, too, apparently beasts of prey. I see the larger swallow the less; which are afterwards beheld, through the transparent coats of their devourers' stomachs, to be struggling in vain against their fate. But, remembering the acute conundrum, What is smaller than a mite's mouth? Answer: That which goes into it, I conclude that the eyes of my most atomic minims can behold coveys of game and shoals of prey which to me remain invisible. And, then, each of these least things is endowed with life and motion, and must be made up of muscles, nerves, a skin, intestines, and circulating fluids, or, at least, of parts analogous to such; so that however minute they may be themselves, they are composed of members minuter still. Their progression, again, is mostly accomplished by means of countless bristles, or cilia, which flicker backwards and forwards with a feathering motion, like the oars of a boat

The cilia may be seen vibrating over the entire bodies of some animalcules, like a crop of barley on the surface of a field waving in the summer wind. Judge whether the word smallest be anything more, as far as any definite meaning is concerned, than a good-natured concession to popular forms of speech! We now know that the realms of life are boundless, if not in magnitude, at least in littleness. The alchymy of optical skill has transmuted a phial of turbid fluid into a golden treasury of facts and inferences.

It is vulgarly supposed that when things cease to be visible to the naked eye, there is an end to measurement; all further speculations touching their magnitude,—granting things invisible to have magnitude,—are superfluous and a complete waste of time. When a village dame clearly sees nothing on a given patch of talc or glass, even with her spectacles astride her nose, she would consider it madness were you to tell her that the proportions of large and less still continue to exist within that boundary, beyond her ken; while the superlative least has never yet been found. But look at this brackish drop of water, which is part of an iron-ladleful I scooped up the other day out of a ruined sanded-up seaport, long deserted by human inhabitants. It is a pearly globule, the bigness of a good fat dewdrop, and clear, except that by looking sharp you can perceive a few specks, which are merely bits of dirt and rubbish. I let my spherical little fish-pond fall gently on a thin strip of glass, and submit it to the microscope. In the small quantity of saline fluid which will hang to the tip of a common goosequill, I have captured a multitude of wild creatures here confined, whose bulk and stature vary as much as those of the birds and beasts in Wombwell's menagerie.

The largest live-lion which I see as yet, has the semblance of a great garden-slug, but is flatter and broader. He glides gracefully along, searching with his mouth to the right and left for—he best knows what. Now he turns himself, and swims sidewise, so as to give me a capital profile view of his person. He is marvellously lean,—not a bit of fat about him,—and so transparent that I can behold, through him, every object over which he passes. He is not at all disgusting in his looks, and is free from every symptom of sliminess. His surface glances with pearly hues, not from any defective achromatism of my objectives,—in plain English, from any fault of my glasses,—but, from the extreme thinness of his outer coat, as is the case in soap-bubbles and films on water. He glides on his way in pleased content, and is soon out of our field of view. We might follow him by hitching the slide on which the drop of salt water rests, but let him gang his gait; for, enter a band of waltzers, not keeping time, nor adhering very strictly to any set figure. They make me giddy to look at them as they whirl and spin. To avoid being utterly bewildered, I will fix my attention on the movements of a single individual. The present ballet-girl, a coryphée who dances in the front rank, has a body like a short-horn carrot, only pellucid as crystal; at her root end she has a pointed radicle, tip, or moveable peg. Where the carrot leaves would sprout, there is a diadem of long rays, which vibrate rapidly, but not too rapidly to be visible. By these evidently the dancer rises and sinks, revolves and rolls; they are probably the moustache which surrounds her mouth, and also the knife and fork with which she eats her dinner, as well as the fingers she catches it with. She is out of sight, and—whisk!—who was that who ran across the room? swift as a swallow, but large and seemingly spherical? There! It stops for one instant, and I am in the presence, I suppose, of one of the rotifers, or wheel-animalcules, but can hardly tell from such a passing glance. I think I saw the wheels twisting about its head, and am sure I saw a yellowish meal safely stored in its portly paunch. Perhaps it is Noteus quadricornis; what do I know?—as the French say when a knotty point puzzles their brains. Another smaller wheeler—it does not follow that he is more juvenile—throws himself into the ring, like Mr. Merriment, with a sudden summerset. He pirouettes a moment, in which feat he is aided by his bell-shaped proportions, and then darts off to another station with a flea-like skip, pirouettes again, leaps aside, and disappears. He favours us with a very short performance, and is continuing his part behind the scenes. I shift the glass slide a little bit, and fall upon a shower of shooting stars. They flash across the field in all directions. They are white, clear, and roundish; that is all I can see, for they are excessively quick and extremely small. But if extreme rapidity perplexes, deliberate movements are sometimes ludicrous. There's a droll creature, who gives you time to look at him. He walks into the circus thus: he makes a bow till he touches the floor with his head. He then stands on his head and makes another bow in the same direction, till he touches the floor with his foot or feet; for his figure is altogether that of a worthy peasant ready-dressed to run a race in a sack. His march, is that of a recruit cautiously practising to the sober measure of the Dead March in Saul. But is he only hoaxing us, after all?—masking his real character? This certainly must be his brother, who creeps in hurriedly on his belly, never leaving hold of the ground with his tail during the whole of his course. What versatility? I begin to suspect he is only the great slug in another disguise; and yet, no, it cannot be possible? But let us not be in too great a hurry about what is possible. How hungry he is. He has seized some unfortunate victim, and shakes it as a terrier

does a rat. Now he is tugging away at some microscopic oyster, which will not be torn from its rock. A globular creature rolls before him; he opens wide his mouth, or the top of his sack; the bolus is somewhat of the biggest, but down it goes. He gives a gulp or two, shrugs his shoulders to make all right, and you can see the new morsel descend to his digestive apparatus. Now he hunts the ground for more, like a staunch hound upon a doubtful scent; and now he pecks about, tossing his head, like a turkey gobbling mast in a beech-and-oak-tree wood. Perhaps, when he has at last got his fill, he too will take to bowing, in evidence of his amiable disposition. Who and what is he? Blank Rotifer, Esquire, I guess. But do you think I know, even by sight, every creature I have circumvented in my drop? Of the rotifers alone there are Heaven only knows how many species.

Besides the stars of the company, there are plenty of second and third-rate performers, who glide in and out modestly enough, keeping up the by-play of the scene; while others, standing stock-still, make up parts of the fixed tableau. Amongst the former are those little things, of various size, with a general resemblance to a weaver's shuttle, some with a single hole in the middle, others with two holes, one at each end; and others with three perforations visible, which slide slowly backwards and forwards without any evident object, sometimes knocking against each other, as if they were playing at blindman's buff with every one of the party blinded. They are diatomaceæ, naviculæ, what-nots; some say they are animals, while the dons will have it they are only plants. I should like to plead for the animality of that neat little canoe-like fellow, who feels his way before him with a long sharp flexible bristle as he sails along. All this is in the water; but, by a touch at the fine adjustment, so as to shift the focus a shade, we catch the surface of the drop, and on it behold a floating emerald with a circlet of bristling rays surrounding it. You have just time to look at it steadily, and lo! it skips from side to side. Its radiating fringe is a set of agile feet and legs, with which it cuts capers on its briny spring-board.

But the quantity of saline liquid in our little reservoir is sensibly diminished by evaporation; it is low-water here, independent of the moon's age. I could easily create a bumping spring-tide by a supply introduced on the tip of a quill tooth-pick; but we will leave things to take their course. The plot thickens; all our characters crowd the stage together in alarm at the scantiness of their native element. Excitement gains ground; it is a water-riot; it is the last scene of Gustavus the Third; it is the market chorus of Masaniello, minus the music, as far as we can hear. By the way, there really exists music unheard by the ears, as there are sights unseen by the eyes, of humanity. Who will take up the science of micracoustics practically, so as to furnish us with a magnifying ear-trumpet, which shall render the conversation of lady-birds audible? But the catastrophe of our drama approaches fast; our grand pantomime attains the acme of its interest. The indefatigable clowns, demons, pantaloons, and columbines, are stranded on shoals, which gradually grow shallower and shallower, till dry land appears; they flourish their cilia, wave their bristles, contract and dilate their bag-like bodies for a moment; and then all is dry and still in death. Fancy a multitudinous caravan of men, horses, camels, and negro-slaves, all scorched up and withered in the Great Desert by the burning breath of an arid simoon. The tragedy is no more than what we have just witnessed. The monads, the wheelers, the volvoxes, and the creepy-crawlies lie, flattened husks; some of them burst and emptied by the final struggle, like fire-balloons torn through a thicket of thorns. The drought also makes manifest to sight what was before unperceived; minute crystals of salt, in pyramids, crosses, lozenges, rhombs; and other sharp-pointed angular shapes, rapidly appear on the field of battle, sometimes thrusting their spear-heads into the bodies of the slain, or entombing them beneath a translucent mausoleum. The graveyard of the departed animalcules is profusely strewn with glittering gems. Here, lies our gallant Noteus, the dashing cavalry officer, with a sparkling rosette of brilliants for his head-stone; there, reposes poor little ensign Whirligig, with a shining cross at his foot, and a polished stiletto of salt by his side; further on, the remains of general Slug are fairly crushed by a great Egyptian pyramid built of hundreds of layers of thousands of glassy bricks.

And these are amongst the Common Things so much sought after now-o'-days, as if they were distant or hard to find. The clue to them lies in your own quicksightedness and activity of mind; therefore it is that ninety-nine out of every hundred men and women quit the world without having once beheld them. Do you wonder, now, that I have spent more than half-an-hour in watching the contents of this single drop of water with which a bit of window-glass has been smeared? The crystals alone, without the animals, are a remarkable spectacle; they are the rapid marshalling, in perfect discipline, of hitherto straggling and mutinous atoms. A hundred years ago, when minute crystalline forms were a recent discovery, the learned believed that the piquant flavour of salt, and of vinegar especially, was owing to the multitude of floating, oblong, quadrangular salts, each of which, tapering from its middle, has two exquisitely sharp ends. The theory then held was, that saline particles, striking upon the nerves of animals,

excite the sensations of taste and smell; and as their forms and degrees of impulse are almost infinitely diversified, the sensibility of pain or pleasure arising therefrom must be varied almost infinitely, according to the greater or less delicacy of the organs they strike on. Are you, judicious reader, able to confirm or refute the hypothesis? Or do you hold that the savouriness of salt is the result of a delicate galvanic action on the surface of the tongue? Unfortunately, the question is a poser for my own poor noddle.

Minute portions of what we call the larger creatures are not less interesting than minute creatures themselves in their integrity. Thus: not to risk a more precise definition, the popular notion of a hair, or of hairs, is a something long, cylindrical, and wire-like as to proportion, and single, simple, or undivided as to shape; unquestionably smooth in respect to surface. But hairs are subject to all sorts of freaks and caprices; they start off into complexities of which you never dreamt them capable. I fancy I discover an agreement of whim in the hairs from creatures of the same natural family and with similar instincts. Certain tribes seem to have made it their study to supply us with wool whose serrated or scaly edges shall furnish us with blankets, hosen, and hats from the close-felting properties which they induce. Mouse's hair is jointed, and seemingly made up of back-bone-like divisions, which are shown by alternate bands of black and transparent material. For easier inspection, take the lock of hairs you mean to treasure in your casket from the belly or armpits of the animal, as finer in texture and more translucent. The tips in which they terminate are pointed and polished in most workmanlike style.

Other small rodents—the loir, or larger dormouse, for instance—exhibit an analogous furry structure. The hair of bats is still more surprising. Generally, it is as if you were to place a lot of long-spouted funnels one within the other, so as to leave a considerable distance from funnel to funnel. An Indian bat is generally selected to furnish show-hair; but our native bats deserve attention, though their fur is rather spiral than cup-shaped in its pattern. The mole, a worm and insect-eater, furnishes hair which has a slight vespertilineous touch superadded to the rodent type. A series of protuberances are visible along the hair, like the wooden knobs by which a flag-staff is mounted. But on the same beast—nay, on man himself—the constitution of bristles varies according to the spot on which they grow. We may liken hair to a genus of plants, of which one species is a native of the eyebrows, another of the beard; a third thrives in the lowlands of the legs, while Alpine hairs betake themselves to the summit of the head. As a rule, the hairs of insects are more complicated than those of quadrupeds. Amongst insects, the hairs of larvæ and caterpillars are more elaborate than those of the creature in its perfect (or rather, its final, because all is perfect) form. Nevertheless, the orange hairs from the red-tailed bee, and the black, white, and yellow ones from the great queen humble-bee, are beautifully transparent wands,—something like the stem of the white lily without the flowers but with the leaves. But another hairy dandy, Dermestes, the gay young larva of a beetle who is fond of frequenting bacon-shops, sports for his personal adornment a pretty lot of test-objects, which are, like the lily-stem, complete with the flowers, which droop in a graceful bouquet from the top.

The next time you meet a hairy caterpillar, stop him, and even were it on the Queen's highway, rob him of two or three tufts of hair. You need not maltreat him, or do him personal injury. Simply twitch out with a pair of pincers the souvenir you want to put into your locket; but spare his life, and let him go home to his anxious friends, tossing his head disdainfully. Or, instead of allowing him to get off so easily, suppose you put him into prison, Bomba-wise, because his beard and whiskers are too long to your liking, and keep him there, without benefit of habeas corpus. By feeding your captive, you may keep him alive till his natural term of caterpillar existence is expired. He will undergo metamorphosis; and you can compare the scales which he wears as a butterfly or a moth with the bristles which beset him while a creeping thing, and which may have rendered good service in his juvenile days. One young larva whom I partially plucked, had spiny prickly fur of two or three kinds; besides those, some of his longest and handsomest hairs were in shape, not in colour, like a peacock's tail-feathers. These thorny, branching, sharp-pointed hairs, are a more formidable-looking defensive armour than the quills of the prickliest porcupine in Africa. All these tiny hairs are to be examined whole and at once, as far as the field of the microscope will admit them. But lovers of minims chop up larger hairs into the thinnest possible slices, exactly as you would your five-shilling April cucumber, and serve them cold with Canada balsam, instead of with pepper, oil, and vinegar. How else could we examine the elementary structure of the whiskers, smellers, manes, and tufts of sundry wild beasts,—the spines of hedgehogs, the quills of porcupines, and the horns of rhinoceroses? all which are eccentric hairs in disguise, who escape running mad by a narrow shave.

Let us not quite forget the hairs of vegetables. In some, as in those of the Tradescantia or spider-wort, a circulation is visible. The fresh-gathered leaf of a French bean is adhesive to the touch, without being clammy or glutinous. You will find the phenomenon to result from little hooked hairs which lay hold

of whatever they are brought into contact with. On aged, worn leaves, the hooklets are broken. But for hooks in earnest, look at those which surround the fruit of the common burdock; slightly magnified, you might do crochet-work with them; under a power a trifle higher, you might hang up on them haunches of venison or legs of beef. Down may be spoken of in the same paragraph as hairs; the down of the seeds from many composite flowers is extremely pleasing to eyes that can see what it is. Transparent, thorny filaments, of spun-glass brightness, are the winged distributors of the wide-spread germs of thistle, groundsel, dandelion, sow-thistle, and a host of their congeners. One of the prettiest is the down of the garden lettuce-seed. Botanists tell us that many of the parts of plants are merely hairs under a modified form. According to this view, a nettle-sting is only a perverted hair, whose disposition is soured into misanthropy and a propensity to mischief. Bring a nettle-sting into the microscopic court, and he will confess that in his basement story he has a concealed stock of poison, which, mounting through a central tube, like the venom from a viper's fang, enters your skin when pierced. By pressing the witness, a drop of the deleterious fluid will appear in evidence against him, hanging in a globule at his dagger's point.

Many objects that are simply dead white to the naked eye, under a magnifier are beautifully transparent. Instances, the mildew on a rose-leaf; the pollen of many flowers—of the common borage, to take one; the down and bristles of many leaves; and minute crystals, especially those of snow. Tiny particles of snow, neatly caught without injury as they drop from the sky, are amongst the most beautiful of winter objects—with the drawback that you cannot comfortably observe them, before a blazing fire, as you are supping your nightcap of hot brandy and water. But, well wrapped up in a bearskin coat, in the cool retreat of a garret with a north aspect, you may pick and choose amongst the grand crosses of all the orders and legions of honour that have ever been invented since mankind first fell in love with stars and garters. Sometimes the fine snow-powder that drifts in between the rickety tiles of your attic will answer the purpose exceedingly well; but the microscope discriminates beautifully between formless and formful materials. Thus, white arsenic in powder is shapeless under the microscope; there are no distinctive characters to be seized, unless the absence of regular crystalline forms; the same of colophane, a powdered resin, which is kept in the pharmacy as a styptic. Lycopod dust, which much resembles the latter to the naked eye—both being seen as a fine yellowish powder—present roughly rounded grains, of very equal diameter, which might be mistaken, at first sight, for irregular-shaped pollen-grains. Dextrine, with its clear, white, semi-transparent, ovoid or ovalish grains, has a likeness to other pollen. Camphor, crushed as near to powder as you can get it, presents the appearance of clear lumps of ice, as produced at table in summer-time.

In art-manufactures, an endless variety of hints may be stolen from the disclosures made by the microscope, without fear of an injunction being issued. There is nothing dishonourable in borrowing patterns intended only for the gaze of insect or animalcule admirers, or in forestalling the design of foliage proposed to be forthcoming next spring. I should be very glad of a worsted-work foot-rug to warm my cold inactive feet, after the pattern of the back of the narrow-leaved sage-leaf, whose peculiar style I have just discovered. Try it, fair directresses of Berlin-wool shops; it is a charming novelty. You will have no difficulty with the light-green shaggy veinings on the plain dark-green ground; but how you will manage the little balls which constitute the originality of the device, I must leave to your own ingenuity to invent. Look also at the back of the leaf of the Deutzia scabra; it is covered with hairs in the form of many-rayed stars, and would make a delightful mat. The upper surface of the leaf is garnished with larger stars composed of fewer rays, mostly five. You might border the central galaxy of your mat with a fringe of stars of the first magnitude. Can you contrive any semi-transparent opaline substance for the stars?

Still, living creatures are the most attractive minims. The first wheel-animalcule I ever saw strongly impressed me with his courage and intelligence. I had put a cyclops, or water-flea, upon the slide, in as large a drop of water as a pin's head will carry. While contemplating the heart-beats and the intestinal motions of my black-eyed monster (who would have made a capital dragon for a microscopic St. George), I observed that he was tormented by some rapid little creature, which darted about him as a gad-fly worries an ox. Its flight through the water resembled that of the humming-bird sphinx through the air, poising itself likewise at intervals, which allowed me to view it at its stationary moments. It was like a bell-shaped, cut-glass chandelier endowed with life; the handle of the bell was a highly-flexible prehensile, crystalline tail, cleft into a finger and thumb at the tip; and around the rim of the bell were what seemed like rapidly-circling little wheels, whose motion the eye could only follow as a mist. Why the rotifer should thus dodge the monoculus,—whether to pick his teeth, as the trochilus of old did for the crocodile; whether to sting him, as a wasp does a terrier dog who unearths his nest; whether to prey on parasites that infest him, as gulls are said to feed

on the balani of the whale; whether to lay eggs on or in him, as the bat-fly does on the horse's coat and the ichneumon-fly in the caterpillar's skin;—I know not, and I don't know who does. Certain it is that these unexplained relations have existed between water-fleas and wheelers for these hundred years past. On looking at my cyclops, I saw in his stomach an undigested wheeler which he had not long devoured; for it was still alive. The one uncaught continued his persecutions fearlessly, until the water began to fail. As the drop evaporated into thirsty air, little rotifer tucked himself under cyclop's body, as the dampest spot he could select, leaving the tip of his tail outside to ascertain the prospect of moister weather, exactly as you stretch your hand out of doors to feel whether it is beginning to rain or not. Could you have done better than the animalcule under the same circumstances? Does it not read like a man crouching under a dying camel in a Saharan wilderness, and sustaining life to the last moment on the juices of the more massive animal?

As to the size of our minims, living or dead, Leuwenhoek measured them by grains of sand selected of such an equal size that a hundred of them placed in a row should extend an inch in length. Observing an animalcule swimming or running past his standard grain, he estimated by comparison the magnitude of the former. Natural objects whose size is known and which do not vary, have since been employed as micrometric measures; the sporules of the puff-ball fungus have a diameter the eight thousand five-hundredth of an inch, while those of the lycopodium are the nine hundred and fortieth of an inch across. Fixed artificial standards are now generally substituted for natural ones. Dr. Wollaston has obtained a platinum wire only the thirty thousandth of an inch in thickness; but minute scales, engraved on glass, with a diamond point, are now most commonly employed. Suppose, for example, a line, the twentieth of an inch in length, traced across the centre of a glass disc. Let this line be divided into a hundred equal parts, every fifth division being distinguished by a longer line, and every tenth by a still longer one. Each of these divisions will be the two-thousandth, the intervals between the fifth divisions will be the four-hundredth, and those between the tenth divisions the two-hundredth part of an inch.

This microscopic scale will be seen magnified with the microscope; and any microscopic object laid upon it will be equally magnified, so that its dimensions can be ascertained by merely counting the divisions of the scale included between those which mark its limits when placed in different positions on the scale. But, in truth, inches and their fractions ought to be utterly discarded from measurements which are independent of popular prejudice. Here, at least, we may employ a decimal scale founded on the METRE, fearless of resistance from the vested interests of ells, pence, pottles, pennyweights, and other influential members of the Weights-and-Measures Corporation. In the scales delivered with French instruments, a millimètre (about the twenty-fifth of an inch) is divided into one hundred parts. The microscopist can apply to his science a reform which as yet is refused to our everyday affairs, and will measure his minims by the decimal fraction of the earth's meridian from equator to pole.

WORD ANALOGIES.

One the gracious line of beauty
In all kinds of beauteous form,
One the flowing law of duty
Beautifying calm and storm:
So it seem'd to me one morning,
Watching childhood ambling by,
Looking on a flower's adorning,
Gazing on a clouded sky.

So meseem'd it:—youthful paces
Flow of graceful beauty have;
Flowing growth have flower graces
Also, like the flowing wave;
Wave, wind, flower, "all a-blowing;"
And we speak of youthful bloom;
Flight is flown too,—flown from flowing:
Flowing, flowering line of doom.

Blow, ye gales of vernal sweetness!
Flow, ye veins of human joy!
Flower, O life, unto completeness!
Flower-like bloom, dear girl or boy!
Stormful wind and flower belovèd,
Both are blossoms of God's breath.
Angel wings of God's Approvèd,
Float us o'er the flood of death!

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

GOSTINNOÏ-DVOR. THE GREAT BAZAAR.

In St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kasan, Odessa, Kieff, Wladimir, Smolensk, Novgorod, and Ekaterinoslaf—not only in these, but in every Russian government town whose proportions exceed those of a village—there is a Gostinnoï-dvor (literally, Things Yard, cour aux choses), or general bazaar for the sale of merchandise and dry provisions. The conquered and treaty-acquired provinces—Polish, Swedish, German, and Turkish—have their markets and emporia; but the Gostinnoï-dvor is an institution thoroughly and purely Russian, and thoroughly Asiatic. It will be my province, in papers to come, to speak of the Gostinnoï-dvor at Moscow, in which the native and humble Russian element is more strongly pronounced, and which is a trifle more picturesque, and a great deal dirtier, than its sister establishment in Petropolis. To the Gostinnoï-dvor, then, of St. Petersburg I devote this paper. It is vaster in size, and incomparably more

magnificent in proportions and contents, than any of its provincial rivals; and, to me, it is much more interesting. It is here that you can watch in its fullest development that most marvellous mixture of super-civilisation and ultra-barbarism; of dirt and perfumes; accomplished, heartless scepticism, and naïve though gross superstition; of prince and beggar; poodle and bear; prevailing tyrant and oppressed creature, which make St. Petersburg to me one magnificent, fantastic volume; a French translation of the Arabian Nights, bound in Russia, illustrated with Byzantine pictures, and compiled by slaves for the amusement of masters as luxurious as the old Persians, as astute and accomplished as the Greeks, as cruel as the Romans, as debauched as those who dwelt in the Destroyed Cities, and whom it is a sin to name.

In seventeen hundred and fifty, Russia being happy under the sway of the benign Czarine Elizabeth—the want of a central bazaar being sensibly felt in the swelling capital, and nothing existing of the kind but a tumble-down row of wooden barracks, as filthy as they were inconvenient, hastily run up by convicts and Swedish prisoners in the days of Petri-Velikê—an enormous edifice of timber was constructed on the banks of the Moïka, close to what was then called the Green Bridge, but is now known as the Polizeiskymost, or Pont de Police. This was the first Gostinnoï-dvor in St. Petersburg. Five years later it incurred the fate of theatres in all parts of the world, and of every class of buildings in Russia,—that species of architectural measles known as a fire. It was burnt to the ground, together with a great portion of the quarter of the city in which it was situated; and its re-erection, in stone, was soon after commenced on the spot where it now stands: on the left-hand side of the Nevskoï Perspective, and about a mile from the chapel-spire of the Admiralty. It forms an immense trapezoid, framed between four streets. Its two principal façades front the Nevskoï and the Sadovvaïa, or Great Garden Street, which last intersects the Perspective opposite the Imperial Library. The principal façade is one hundred and seventy-two sagenes long. There are three archines to a sagene, or eighty-four inches; I think, therefore, that I am right, according to Cockeroffsky, in saying that there is a frontage of twelve hundred and four feet, or more than four hundred English yards, to the Gostinnoï-dvor. The reconstruction in stone did not extend very far. Funds came in too slowly; or, more probably, were spent too quickly by those entrusted with them; and, for a long time, the rest of the bazaar consisted of rows of barracks and booths in timber, which were all duly re-consumed by fire in seventeen hundred and eighty. The Gostinnoï-dvor was then taken in hand by the superb Catherine, who had a decided genius for solidity and durability in architecture; and under her auspices, the great Things Yard assumed the form it now presents. Huge as it is, it only forms a part of that which the Russians call the Gorod, or City of Bazaars; for immediately adjoining it—inferior in splendour of structure, but emulous in stores of merchandise and vigour of traffic, are three other bazaars,—the Apraxine-dvor, the Stchoukine-dvor, and the Tolkoutchji-rinok, or Great Elbow-market, which last is the Rag Fair or Petticoat Lane of St. Petersburg: all the old clothes, and a great proportion of the stolen goods, of the capital being there bought and sold.

On the same side of the way as the Gostinnoï-dvor on the Nevskoï, and close to the commencement of its arcades, is the enormous edifice of the Douma, or Hotel de Ville. This was originally built of wood, but has been gradually repaired and enlarged with stone, and has slowly petrified, as men's minds are apt to do in this marmorifying country. Its heart of oak is now as hard as the nether millstone; and stucco pilasters, and cornices in Crim-Tartar Corinthian, together with abundance of whitewash and badigeonnement, conceal its primitive log walls.

This huge place (what public building in Petersburg is not huge?) is facetiously supposed to be the seat of the municipal corporation of St. Petersburg. There is a civil governor, or Lord Mayor, it is true, who is officially of considerably less account than the signification of an idiot's tale in the hands of M. le Général Ignatieff, the military Governor-General of St. Petersburg, without whose written authority no person can leave the capital. There is a president and six burgomasters, and a Council of Ten notable citizens; but all and every one of them, governors civil and governors military, burgomasters and notables, are members of the celebrated and artistic corps of Marionnettes, of whose performances at Genoa and at the Adelaide Gallery most people must have heard, and who have a theatre on a very large scale indeed in Holy Russia. They are beautifully modelled, dressed with extreme richness (especially as regards stars and crosses), are wonderfully supple in the joints, and have the most astonishing internal mechanism for imitating the sounds of the human voice. The strings of these meritorious automata are pulled by a gentleman by the name of Dolgorouki, who succeeded that eminent performer, M. Orloff, as chief of the gendarmerie and High Police, and manager (under the rose) of sixty-five millions of Marionnettes. So perfectly is he master of the strings of his puppets, and so well is he acquainted with the departments behind the scenes of the Theatre Royal Russia, that the ostensible lessee and manager, Alexander Nicolaïevitch, who inherited the property from his father, Nicolaïaleosandrovitch (an enterprising ma-

nager, but too fond of heavy melodramas of the startling order), is said to be rather afraid of his stage-manager. A. N. is a mild and beneficent middle-aged young man, whose dramatic predilections are supposed to lean towards light vaudevilles and burlettas, making all the characters happy at the fall of the curtain. He is not indisposed either, they say, to many free translations from the French and English; but the stage-manager of the Marionnettes won't hear of such a thing, and continues to keep the tightest of hands over his puppets. The most curious feature in all this is, that the stage-manager has himself a master whom he is compelled, no one knows why, to obey.

This master—a slow, cruel, treacherous, dishonest tyrant—is never seen, but dwells remote from mortal eyes, though not from their miserable ken, like the grand Llama. His—her—its name is System. Liberal, nay, democratic stage-managers, have been known to assume the government of the sixty-five million dolls, and forthwith, in their blind obedience to system, to become intolerable oppressors, spies, and thieves. Things have gone wrong before now in the Theatre Royal; and several lessees have died of sore throat, of stomach-ache, of head-ache, and of compression of the œsophagus. But this abominable System has lived through all vicissitudes, and though immensely old, is as strong and wicked as ever.* The old hypocrite gives out occasionally that he is about to reform; but the only way to reform that hoary miscreant, is to strangle him at once, and outright. Your fingers are not unaccustomed to this work, most noble Boyards.

The only timber yet unshivered of the Douma is the great watchtower, one hundred and fifty feet in height, which is entirely of sham marble, but real wood. There is a curious telegraphic apparatus of iron at the summit, and in this work the different fire-signals. They are in constant employment.

I can imagine no better way of conveying a palpable notion of things I have seen in this strange land than to institute comparisons between things Russian, which my reader will never know, I hope, save through the medium of faithful travellers, and things familiar to us all in London and Paris. So. If you take one avenue of the glorious Palais Royal, say that where the goldsmith and jewellers' shops are, and with this combine the old colonnade of the Regent's Quadrant; if to this you add a dwarfed semblance of the Piazza in Covent Garden—especially as regards the coffee-stalls at early morning; if you throw in a dash of the Cloisters of Westminster Abbey—taking care to Byzantinise all the Gothic, but keeping all the chequered effects of chiaro-oscuro; if, still elaborating your work, you piece on a fragment of that musty little colonnade out of Lower Regent Street, which ought to belong to the Italian Opera House, but doesn't, and at whose corner Mr. Seguin's library used to be; if, as a final architectural effort, you finish off with a few yards of the dark entry in Canterbury Cathedral yard, and with as much as you like (there is not much) of that particularly grim, ghostly, and mildewed arcade at the Fields corner of Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn: if you make an architectural salmagundy of all these; spice with a flavour of the delightful up-and-down, under-the-basement and over-the-tiles, streets of Chester; garnish with that portion of the peristyle of the Palace of the Institute in Paris, where the print-stalls are; and serve up hot with reminiscences of what old Exeter 'Change must have been like; you will have something of a skeleton notion of the outward appearance of the Gostinnoï-dvor. Further to educate the eye, I must relate, that round all the pillars there is a long Lowther Arcade broke loose, of toys and small ware; that the Palais-Royal-like shops are curiously dovetailed with bits of the Bezesteen at Constantinople; that amongst the diamonds and gold lace there is a strong tinge of Holywell Street: to plant the photograph well in the stereoscope, I must beg my reader to endeavour to imagine this London and Paris medley transplanted to Russia. There is a roaring street outside, along which the fierce-horsed and fierce-driven droschkies fly; through the interstices of the arches, you see, first droschkies, then dust, then palaces, palaces, palaces, then a blue blue sky; within a crowd of helmets, grey great-coats, beards, boots, red shirts, sheepskins, sabres, long grey cloaks, pink bonnets, and black velvet mantles, little children in fancy bonnets; nurses in crimson satin, and pearl tiaras; and all this circulating in an atmosphere where the Burlington Arcade-like odour of pomatum and bouquet à la reine (for perfumes abound in the Gostinnoï-dvor) struggles with that of Russia leather, wax-candles, and that one powerful searching, oleaginous smell, which is compounded of

* A magnificent diamond tabatière full of snuff has recently been thrown in the eyes of Western Europe from the coronation throne at Moscow. The only real abolition of a grievance, in this much belauded manifesto, is the removal of part of the tax on passports to native Russians, who, if they had families, were formerly obliged to pay something like four hundred pounds a-year to the government while travelling. The political amnesty is a cruel farce: not but that I believe the Emperor Alexander to be (though deficient in strength of mind) a sovereign of thorough liberal tendencies, and of extreme kindness of heart; but he dares not accomplish a tithe of the reforms he meditates. I was speaking one day to an intelligent Russian on this subject (he was a republican and a socialist, but an accomplished gentleman), who, so far from blaming the Czar for his meagre concessions to the spirit of the age, made a purely Russian excuse for him: "Que voulez-vous?" he said; "le Tsar lui-même a peur d'être rossé par la Police Secrète." The idea of the Autocrat of all the Russias being deterred from increased liberalism by bodily fear of the STICK is sufficiently extravagant; but there is, nevertheless, a great deal of truth in the location.

Heaven knows what, but which is the natural, and to the manor-born, smell of this sainted land. Mind, too, that the roofs are vaulted, that no lamps save sacred ones are ever allowed to be here lighted; and that at about every interval of ten yards there is a frowning archway whose crown and spandrils are filled in with holy pictures, richly framed in gold and silver, and often more richly jewelled. For in this the special home and house of call for commercial roguery, the arrangements for the admired Fetish worship are on a very grand and liberal scale.

A lamp suspended before the picture of a saint is supposed to carry an indisputable policy of insurance with it in its sacred destination; but, votive lamps apart, not a light is allowed at any time, night or day, in the Gostinnoï-dvor. There are no cigar-shops, it need scarcely be said—nor magasins for the sale of lucifer-matches. The Russians have a peculiar horror of, and yet fondness for, lucifer-matches, or spitchki, as they are called. There is a popular notion among servants and peasants, that they are all contraband (I never had the slightest difficulty in purchasing them openly), and that their sale—except to nobles, of course—is prohibited by the government. There are so many things you may not do in Russia, that I should not have been the least surprised if this had really been the case. The Russian matches, I may add, are of the most infamous quality—one in about twenty igniting. I believe that it is considered rather mauvais ton than otherwise if you do not frictionise them on the wall to obtain a light. I had a Cossack servant on whom, on my departure from Russia, I bestowed a large box of wax taper matches I had brought from Berlin; and I verily believe that he was more gratified with the gift than with the few paper roubles I gave him in addition.

As soon as it is dusk the shops of the Gostinnoï-dvor are shut, and the early-closing movement carried into practical operation by hundreds of merchants and shopmen. Within a very recent period, even, so intense was the dread of some fresh conflagration that no stove or fireplace, not so much as a brazier or chaufferette, was suffered to exist within the bazaar. The unfortunate shopkeepers wrapped themselves up as well as they could in pelisses of white wolfskin (which, in winter, forms still a distinctive item of their costume); and by one ingenious spirit there was invented a peculiar casque or helmet of rabbit-skin, which had a fur visor buttoning over the nose something after the absurd manner of the convicts' caps at Pentonville prison. Some hundreds of cases of frost-bite having occurred, however, and a large proportion of the merchants showing signs of a tendency to make up for the lack of outward heat by the administration of inward stimulants, the government stepped in just as the consumption of alcohol threatened to make spontaneous combustion imminent, and graciously allowed stoves in the Gostinnoï-dvor. These are only tolerated from the first of November to the first of the ensuing April, and are constructed on one uniform and ingenious pattern, the invention of General Amossoff. Thus remembering all these regulation stoves, that no wood has been used in the construction of the whole immense fabric,—all being stone, brick, and iron, the very doors being lined with sheets of the last-named material; and recalling all the elaborate and severe police regulations for guarding the Gostinnoï-dvor against the devouring element, I should take it quite as a matter of course, were I to hear some fine morning that the pride of mercantile Petersburg had been burnt to the ground. Man has a way of proposing and Heaven of disposing, which slide in perfectly different grooves. Iron curtains for isolation, fireproof basements, and reservoirs on roofs, won't always save buildings from destruction, somehow; and though nothing can be more admirable than the precautions against fire adopted by the authorities, the merchants of the Gostinnoï-dvor have an ugly habit of cowering in their back shops, where you may frequently detect them in the very act of smoking pipes of Toukoff tobacco, up the sleeves of their wolf-skin touloupes, or poking charcoal embers into the eternal samovar or tea-urn. I have too much respect for the hagiology of the orthodox Greek Church to attribute any positive danger from fire to the thousand and one sacred grease-pots that swing, kindled from flimsy chains in every hole and corner; but, I know that were I agent for the Sun Fire Insurance, I would grant no policy, or, at all events, pay none, for a house in which there was a samovar. Once lighted, it is the best tea-urn in the world; the drawback is, that you run a great risk of burning the house down before you can warm your samovar properly.

The shops in the Gostinnoï-dvor are divided into lines or rows, as are the booths in John Bunyan's Vanity Fair. There is Silkmercers' Row; opposite to which, on the other side of the street, are Feather-bed Row and Watchmakers' Row. Along the Nevskoï side extend Cloth-merchants' Row, Haberdashers' Row, and Portmanteau Row, intermingled with which are sundry stationers, booksellers, and hatters. The side of the trapezoid over against the Apraxine-dvor (which runs parallel to the Nevskoï) is principally occupied by coppersmiths and trunkmakers; the archways are devoted to the stalls of toy-merchants and dealers in holy images: while all the pillar-standings are occupied by petty chapmen and hucksters of articles as cheap as they are miscellaneous. It is this in-door and out-door selling that gives the Gostinnoï-dvor such a quaint resemblance to a Willis's Room Fancy Fair set up in the middle of

Whitechapel High Street. One side of the trapezoid I have left unmentioned, and that is the long arcade facing the Sadovvaïa, or Great Garden Street. This is almost exclusively taken up by the great Boot Row.

Every human being is supposed to be a little insane on some one subject. To the way of watches some men's madness lies; others are cracked about religion, government, vegetarianism, perpetual motion, economical chimney-sweeping, lead-mines, squaring the circle, or the one primeval language. Take your soberest, most business-like friend, and run carefully over his gamut, and you shall come on the note; sweep the lyre and you shall find one cracked chord. I knew a man once—the keenest at driving a bargain to be met with out of Mark Lane—who never went mad till two o'clock in the morning, and on one topic; and then he was as mad as a march hare. We think that we have such an excellent coinage; but how many a bright-looking shilling is only worth elevenpence halfpenny! We boast of our improved bee-hives; but how often the buzzing honey-makers forsake the hive, and house themselves in our bonnets! I have a Boswell (every writer to the lowliest has his Boswell) who professes to have read my printed works; and according to him I am mad on the subject of boots. He declares that my pen is as faithful to the boot-tree as the needle to the pole; and that, even as the late Lord Byron could not write half-a-dozen stanzas without alluding, in some shape or other, to his own lordship's personal attractions and hopeless misery, so I cannot get over fifty lines of printed matter without dragging in boots, directly or indirectly, as a topic for description or disquisition. It may be so. It is certain that I have a great affection for boots, and can ride a boot-jack as I would a hobby-horse. Often have I speculated philosophically upon old boots; oftener have I ardently desired the possession of new ones; and of the little man wants here below, nor wants long, I cannot call to mind anything I have an earnester ambition for than a great many pair of new boots—good boots—nicely blacked, all of a row, and all paid for. I have mentioned, and admit this boot-weakness, because I feel my soul expand, and my ideas grow lucid as I approach the great Sapagi-Linie, or Boot Row, of the Gostinnoï-dvor.

The Russians are essentially a booted people. The commonalty do not understand shoes at all; and when they have no boots, either go barefooted, or else thrust their extremities into atrocious canoes of plaited birch-bark. Next to a handsome kakoschnik or tiara headdress, the article of costume most coveted by a peasant-woman is a pair of full-sized men's boots. One of the prettiest young English ladies I ever knew used to wear Wellington boots, and had a way of tapping their polished sides with her parasol-handle that well nigh drove me distracted; but let that pass—a booted Russian female is quite another sort of personage. In the streets of Petersburg the "sign of the leg" or a huge jack-boot with a tremendous spur, all painted the brightest scarlet, is to be found on legions of houses. The common soldiers wear mighty boots, as our native brigade, after Alma, knew full well; and if you make a morning call on a Russian gentleman, you will very probably find him giving audience to his bootmaker.

But the Boot Row of the Gostinnoï-dvor! Shops follow shops, whose loaded shelves display seemingly interminable rows of works addressed to the understanding, and bound in the best Russia leather. The air is thick and heavy—not exactly with the spicy perfumes of Araby the Blest—but with the odour of the birch-bark, used in the preparation of the leather. Only here can you understand how lamentably sterile we western nations are in the invention of boots. Wellingtons, top-boots, Bluchers, Oxonians, high-lows, and patent leather Albert slippers,—name these, and our boot catalogue is very nearly exhausted; for, though there are very many other names for boots, and cunning tradesmen have even done violence to the Latin and Greek languages, joining them in unholy alliance to produce monstrous appellations for new boots; the articles themselves have been but dreary repetitions of the old forms. What is the Claviculodidastokolon, but an attenuated Wellington? what is even the well-known and established Clarence but a genteel highlow?

But, in the Sapagi-Linie you shall find boots of a strange fashion, and peculiar to this strange people. There are the tall jack-boots, worn till within a few months since by the Czar's chevalier guards. They are so long, so stern, so rigid, so uncompromising that the big boots of our life-guardsmen would look mere stocking-hose to them. They are rigid, creaseless, these boots: the eyes, methinks, of James the Second would have glistened with pleasure to see them; they seem the very boots that gracious tyrant would have put a criminal's legs into, and driven wedges between. They stand up bodily, boldly on the shelves, kicking the walls behind them with their long gilt spurs, trampling their wooden resting-place beneath their tall heels, pointing their toes menacingly at the curious stranger. As to polish, they are varnished rather than blacked, to such a degree of brilliancy, that the Great Unknown immortalised by Mr. Warren, might not only shave himself in them, but flick the minutest speck of dust out of the corner of his eye, by the aid of their mirrored surface. These boots are so tall, and strong, and hard, that I believe them to be musket-proof, bomb-proof, Jacobi-machine proof, as they say the forts of Cronstadt are. If it should ever happen that the

chevalier-guards went forth to battle, (how did all the correspondents in the Crimea make the mistake of imagining that the Russian guards as guards were sent to Sebastopol?) and that some of those stupendous cavaliers were laid low by hostile sabre or deadly bullet, those boots, I am sure, would never yield. The troopers might fall, but the boots would remain erect on the ensanguined field, like trees, scathed indeed, by lightning, and encumbered by the wreck of branches and foliage, but standing still, firm-rooted and defiant. But they will never have the good-luck to see the tented field,—these boots,—even if there be a new war, and the chevaliers be sent to fight. The jack-boots have been abolished by the Czar Alexander, and trousers with stripes down the sides substituted for them. They only exist now in reality on the shelves of the Sapagi-Linie, and in the imagination of the artists of the illustrated newspapers. Those leal men are true to the jack-boot tradition. Each artist writes from Moscow home to his particular journal to assure his editor that his drawings are the only correct ones, and that he is the only correspondent to be depended upon; and each depicts costumes that never existed, or have fallen into desuetude long since. Wondrous publications are illustrated newspapers; I saw the other day, in a Great Pictorial Journal, some charming little views of St. Petersburg in eighteen hundred and fifty-six, and lo! they are exact copies of some little views I have of St. Petersburg in eighteen hundred and thirty-seven. There is one of a bridge from St. Izaak's church to Wassily-Ostrow, that has been removed these ten years; but this is an age of go-aheadism, and it is not for me to complain. The jack-boots of the chevalier-guards, however, I will no more admit than I will their presence in the Crimea; for wert thou not my friend and beloved, Arcadi-Andrievitch? count, possessor of serfs, honorary counsellor of the college, and cornet in the famous chevalier-guards of the empress? Four languages didst thou speak, Arcadi-Andrievitch, baritone was thy voice, and of the school of Tamburini thy vocalisation. Not much afraid of Leopold de Meyer needst thou have been on the pianoforte; expert decorator wert thou of ladies' albums; admirable worker of slippers in gold and silver thread; cunning handicraftsman in wax flowers and dauntless breaker-in of untamed horses. In England, Arcadi-Andrievitch, thou wouldst have been a smock-faced schoolboy. In precocious Russia thou wert honorary counsellor, and had a college diploma, a droschki (haras), stud of brood mares, and a cornetcy in the Guards. There are hair-dressers in Russia who will force mustachios on little boy's lips (noble little boys), and they have them like early peas or hothouse pines; for everything is to be had for silver roubles, even virility. Arcadi-Andrievitch and I were great friends. He had been for some months expectant of his cornetcy, and longing to change his Lyceum cocked hat, blue frock, and toasting-fork-like small-sword, for the gorgeous equipments of a guardsman. He was becoming melancholy at the delay in receiving his commission; now, fancying that the Czar's aides-de-camp had sequestered his petition; now, that his Majesty himself had a spite against him, and was saying, "No! Arcadi-Andrievitch, you shall not have your cornetcy yet awhile"; now grumbling at the continual doses of paper roubles he was compelled to administer to the scribes at the War-office and the Etat Major. The Russians (the well-born ones) are such liars, that I had begun to make small bets with myself that Arcadi-Andrievitch had been destined by his papa for the career of a Tchinovnik, or government clerk, and not for a guardsman at all; when the youth burst into my room one day, in a state of excitement so violent as to lead him to commit two grammatical errors in the course of half-an-hour's French conversation, and informed me, that at last he had received his commission. I saw it; the Imperial Prikaz or edict, furnished with a double eagle big enough to fly away with a baby. Arcadi-Andrievitch was a cornet. I am enabled to mention my Russian friends by name without incurring the slightest risk of compromising them, or betraying private friendship; for in Russia you do not call a friend Brownoff or Smithoffsky, but you address him by his Christian name, adding to it the Christian name of his father. Thus, Arcadi-Andrievitch, Arcadius the son of Andrew. You employ the same locution with a lady: always taking care to use her father's baptismal name. Thus, Alexandra-Fedrovna, Alexandra the daughter of Theodore.

To return to my Arcadi-Andrievitch. Though he was but a little boy, he possessed, as I have remarked, a droschky; and in this vehicle, a very handsome one, with a fast trotter in the shafts, and a clever mare, dressée à la volée, by the side, and driven by a flowing bearded moujik, his property (who was like the prophet Jeremiah), he took me home to see his uniforms. The young rogue had had them, all ready, for the last six weeks, and many a time, I'll be bound, he had tried them on, and admired his little figure in the glass, late at night or early in the morning. Although this lad had a dimpled chin that never had felt the barber's shear, he had a very big house all to himself, on the Dvortsovaïa Nabérójenaïa, or Palace Quay: a mansion perhaps as large as Lord John Russell's in Chesham Place, and a great deal handsomer. It was his house: his Dom; the land was his, and the horses in the stable were his, and the servants in the antechamber were his, to have and to hold under Heaven and the Czar. I forget how many thousand

roubles, spending money, he had a year, this beardless young fellow. I saw his uniforms; the tunic of white cloth and silver; the cuirass of gold; the brilliant casque surmounted by a flowing white plume; the massive epaulettes, the long silver sash, together with a vast supplementary wardrobe of undress frocks and overalls, and the inevitable grey capote. "But where," I asked, "are the jack-boots I have so often admired in the Sapagi-Linie, and the military costume prints in Daziaro's window?" He sighed, and shook his head mournfully. "The Gossudar" (the lord) "has abolished the boots," he answered. "I used to dream of them. I had ordered four pairs—not in the Gostinnoï-dvor; for the bootmakers there are soukinsinoï (sons of female dogs)—but of my own sabakoutchelovek,—of a booter who is a German hound, and lives in the Resurrection Perspective. He brought them home on the very day that the boots were suppressed. He had the impudence to say that he could not foresee the intentions of the Imperial Government, and to request me to pay for them; upon which, I believe, Mitophan, my body servant, broke two of his teeth—accidentally, of course—in pushing him down-stairs. He is an excellent bootmaker, and one whom I can conscientiously recommend to you, and has long since, I have no doubt, put on more than the price of my jack-boots and his broken teeth to my subsequent bills.—Mais que voulez-vous?"—Thus far Arcadi-Andrievitch; and this is how I came to know that the Chevalier Guards no longer wore jack-boots.

I wonder why they were swept away. Sometimes I fancy it was because their prestige, as boots, disappeared with the Czar Nicholas. Like that monarch, they were tall, stern, rigid, uncompromising; the cloth overalls were more suited to the conciliating rule of Alexander the Second. Nicholas, like Bombastes, hung his terrible boots to the branch of a tree, and defied those who dared displace them to meet him face to face. They were displaced, and he was met face to face, and the Czar Bombastes died in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole, in a certain vaulted chamber in the Winter Palace. I have seen the tears trickle down the cheeks of the Ischvostchiks passing the window of this chamber, when they have pointed upward, and told me that Uncle Nicolaï died there; and Nicholas indeed had millions to weep for him,—all save his kindred, and his courtiers, and those who had felt his wicked iron hand. There is a hot wind about the death-beds of such sovereigns that dries up the eyes of those who dwell within palaces.

Far, far away have the jack-boots of the Empress's Guards led me from the Sapagi-Linie of the Gostinnoï-dvor, to which I must, for very shame, return. More boots, though. Here are the hessians worn by the dashing hussars of Grodno,—hessians quite of the Romeo Coates cut. Now, the jack-boot is straight and rigid in its lustrous leather all the way down, from mid-thigh to ancle; whereas to your smart hussar, there is allowed the latitude of some dozen creases or wrinkles in the boot about three inches above the instep, and made with studied carelessness. Then the body of the boot goes straight swelling up the calf. I doubt not but a wrinkle the more or the less on parade would bring a hussar of Grodno to grief. These hessians are bound round the tops with broad gold lace, and are completed by rich bullion tassels.

Surely it was a spindle-shanked generation that gave over wearing hessians; and a chuckle-headed generation that imbecilely persist in covering the handsomest part of the boot with hideous trousers. To have done with the Gostinnoï-dvor, you have here the slight, shapely boots of the militia officer,—light and yielding, and somewhat resembling the top-boots of an English jockey, but with the tops of scarlet leather in lieu of our sporting ochre: there are the boots worn by the Lesquians of the Imperial Escort, curious boots, shelving down at the tops like vertical coal-scuttles, and with quaint, concave soles, made to fit the coal-scoop like stirrups of those very wild horsemen; and, finally, there are the barbarically gorgeous boots — or rather, boot-hose—of the Circassians of the Guard,—long, lustrous, half-trews, of a sort of chain-mail of leather, the tops and feet of embroidered scarlet leather, with garters and anklets of silver fringe and beads, and with long, downward-curved spurs of silver chased and embossed.

The theme shall still be boots, for the Sapagi-Linie overflows with characteristic boots. Are not boots the most distinctive parts and parcels of the Russian costume; and am I not come from Wellington Street, Strand, London, to the Gostinnoï-dvor expressly to chronicle such matters? Am I not in possession of this, a Russian establishment, and is it not my task, like an honest broker's man, to take a faithful inventory of the sticks? Here are the long boots of Tamboff, reaching high up the thigh, and all of scarlet leather. These boots have a peculiar, and ,to me, delightful odour, more of myrrh, frankincense, sandal-wood, benzoin, and other odoriferents, than of the ordinary birch-bark tanned leather. They will serve a double purpose. They are impervious to wet; and (if you don't mind having red legs, like a halberdier or a turkey-cock) are excellent things to splash through the mud in; for mud only stains them in a picturesque and having-seen-service sort of way; and if you hang them to dry in your chamber when you return, they will pervade the whole suite of apartments with a balmy, breezy scent of new dressing-case, and pocket-book, combined with pot-pourri in a jar of vieux Sèvres, pastilles of Damascus, Stamboul tchibouk-sticks, and pink billet-doux from a

countess. If you like those odours gently blended one with the other, you would revel in Tamboff boots. But perhaps you like the odour of roast meat better, and cannot abide the smell of any leather. There are many men as as many tastes as minds to them, we know. There are some that cannot abide a gaping pig; and I have heard of people who swooned at the sight of Shapsygar cheese, and became hysterical at the smell of garlic.

Who has not heard of the world-famous Kasan boots? Well; perhaps not quite world-famous—there are to be sure a good many things Russian, and deservedly celebrated there, which are quite unknown beyond the limits of the Empire. At all events, the boots of Kasan deserve to be famous all over the world; and I will do my best—though that may be but little—to make them known to civilised Europe. The Kasan boot supplies the long-sought-after and sighed-for desideratum of a slipper that will keep on—of a boot that the wearer may lounge and kick his legs about in, unmindful of the state of his stocking-heels (I do not allude to holes, though they will happen in the best regulated bachelor families, but to darns, which, though tidier, are equally distasteful to the sight), or a boot-slipper, or slipper-boot, which can be pulled off and on with far greater ease than a glove; which cannot be trodden down at heel, and which will last through all sorts of usage a most delightfully unreasonable time. The Kasan boot is inmately Tartar, and the famous Balslagi of the Turkish women—loose, hideous, but comfortable boots of yellow leather which they pull over their papouches when they go a bathing or a bazaaring—are evidently borrowed from the Kasan prototype. This, to be descriptive after having been (not unduly) eulogistic, is a short boot of the highlow pattern, usually of dark crimson leather (other colours can be had, but red is the favourite with the Russians). There is a cushion-like heel, admirably yielding and elastic, and a sole apparently composed of tanned brown paper, so slight and soft is it, but which is quite tough enough and landworthy enough for any lounging purpose. It is lined with blue silk, whose only disadvantage is, that if you wear the Kasan boot, as most noble Russians do (without stockings), the dye of the silk being rather imperfectly fixed, comes off on your flesh, and gives you the appearance of an ancient indigo-stained Briton. The shin and instep of the Kasan boot are made rich and rare by the most cunning and fantastic workmanship in silver-thread and beadwork, and mosaic and marqueterie, or buhl-work, or inlaying—call it what you will—of different-coloured leathers. There is a tinge of the Indian mocassin about it, a savour of the carpets of Ispahan, a touch of the dome of St. Mark's, Venice; but a pervading and preponderating flavour of this wild-beast-with-his-hide-painted-and-his-claws-gilt country. It isn't Turkish, it isn't Byzantine, it isn't Venetian, it isn't Moyen-age Bohemian. Why or how should it be, indeed, seeing that it is a boot from Kasan in Russia! Yet it has, like the monstrous Gostinnoï-dvor, its most certain dim characteristics of all the first four mentioned nationalities, which all succumb, though, in the long run to the pure barbaric Muscovite element, unchanged and unchangeable (for all thy violent veneering, Peter Velikè) from the days of Rurik and Boris-Goudonof, and the false Demitrius. Every rose has a thorn—every advantage its drawback, and the quaint, cosy, luxuriant boot of Kasan has one, in the shape of a very powerful and remarkably unpleasant odour, of which fried candle-grease and a wet day in Bermondsey would appear to be the chief components. Whether the men of Kasan have some secret or subtle grease wherewith to render the leather supple, and that the disagreeable odour is so inherent to and inseparable from it as the nasty taste from that precious among medicaments, castor oil; or whether the Kasan boot smell is simply one of the nine hundred and twelve distinct Russian stenches, of whose naturalisation in all the Russias, Enter, Malte-Brun, and other savans, scientific and geographical, have been unaccountably silent, is uncertain; but so it is. We must accept the Kasan boot as it is, and not repine at its powerful odour. Camphor will do much; philosophy more; acclimatisation to Russian smells, most of all.

There is certainly no invention for morning lounging that can equal this delightful boot. Our common Western slipper is an inelegant, slipshod, dangling, prone to bursting-at-the-side-imposition (that I had any chance of obtaining those beauteous silk-and-bead slippers thou hast been embroidering for the last two years, Oh, Juliana!) There is certainly something to be said in favour of the highly-arched Turkish papouche. It is very easy to take off; but then, it is very difficult to keep on; though, for the purpose of correcting an impertinent domestic on the mouth, its sharp wooden heel is perhaps unrivalled. There are several men I should like to kick, too, with a papouche—its turned-up toe is at once contemptuous and pain-inflicting. I have heard it said that the very best slippers in the world are an old pair of boots, ventilated with corn-valves made with a razor; but the sage who gave utterance to that opinion, sensible as it is, would change his mind if I had bethought myself of bringing him home a pair of Kasan boots. I have but one pair, of which, at the risk of being thought selfish, I do not mean, under any circumstances, to deprive myself. I have but to thrust my foot out of bed in the morning, for the Kasan boot to come, as it were of its own volition, and nestle to my foot till it has coiled itself round it, rather than shod me. I may toast the soles of

this boot of boots against the walls of my stove (my feet being within them), without the slightest danger of scorching my flesh or injuring the leather. I might strop a razor on my Kasan boot; in short, I might do as many things with it as with the dear old Leather Bottelle in the song; and when it is past its legitimate work it will serve to keep nails in, or tobacco, or such small wares.

The morning equipment of a Russian seigneur is never complete without Kasan boots. When you pay an early visit to one of these, you will find his distinguished origin reclining on an ottoman, a very long Turkish chibouk, filled with the astute M. Fortuna's krepky tabaky between his lips, his aristocratic form enveloped either in a long Caucasian caftan of the finest sheepskin, or in a flowered Persian dressing-gown, a voluminous pair of charovars, or loose trousers of black velvet bound round his hips with a shawl of crape and gold tissue, while a pair of genuine Kasan boots (to follow out the approved three-volume novel formula), complete his costume. Stay—his origin's head will be swathed in a silk pocket-handkerchief, which sometimes from its pattern, and sometimes from its uncleanliness, is not quite so picturesque. On a gueridon, or side-table, there will be, a green velvet porte-cigare, a box of sweetmeats, a bottle of Bordeaux, a syphon of Selzer water, and a half-emptied tumbler of tea, looking very muddy and sticky in its glass prism. There will be a lap-dog in the room who has been taught to understand French, though a Cossack cur by four descents, and who, at the word of command, in that language, goes through the military exercise. There will be the lap-dog, Mouche, or Brio's, plate of macaroons and milk in the corner. There will be, very probably, a parrot, perhaps a monkey; but in default of these, certainly a musical box, or a guitar. Scattered round his origin's feet, and on his ottoman, will be his origin's morning light literature: Paul de Kock, Charles de Bernard, or Xavier de Montépin, their amusing and instructive works: [Gentlemen of the old school read Pigault, Lebrun, and Ducray-Duminil,] you never see any newspapers. His origin does not care about boring himself with the Journal de St. Pétersburg, or the Gazette de l'Académie; and as for the Times, Punch, the Charivari, they are not to be had, even for nous autres in Russia. You seldom see any Russian book, unless his excellency deigns to be a savant. What is the good of studying the literature of a language which nous autres never speak! There is a piano in a corner, with a good deal of tobacco-ash on the keys. There are some portraits of opera girls on the walls, and some more Paris Boulevard lithographs too silly to be vicious, though meant to be so. If my reader wants to see portraits of Our Lady, or of the Czar, he or she must go to Gavrilo-Ermovaïevitch, the merchant's house, or Sophron-Pavlytch, the moujik's cabin—not to the mansions of nous autres. There is about the chamber, either in costume, or accoutrement, some slight but unmistakeable sign of its owner not always wearing the Persian dressing-gown, the charovars, and the Kasan boots, but being compelled to wear a sword, a helmet, a grey great-coat, and a stand-up collar; and there is, besides the parrot, the monkey, and the lap-dog, another living thing in some corner or other—in the shape of one of his origin's serfs, who is pottering about making cigarettes, or puffing at a samovar, or polishing a watch-case, silently and slavishly as is his duty.

JOHN HOUGHTON'S WISDOM.

Mr. John Houghton, Gentleman, Fellow of the Royal Society, naturalist, seller of apothecaries' wares and groceries at the corner of Eastcheap, commission-agent, and editor of a newspaper of universal knowledge, was a man of whom his age had not a little reason to be satisfied, considering the many queer things which that age had been accused of doing: during many years of the reigns of Charles the Second, James the Second, William and Mary, William alone, and Anne, did Mr. John Houghton bring forth his odd little newspaper, containing a budget of curious things, and useful things very little known at the present day. He was able to publish a testimonial relating to the praiseworthiness of his labours, signed by men who, in some instances, have attained a reputation which the forgotten John Houghton more really deserved. Samuel Pepys, John Evelyn, Robert Plot, Daniel Coxe, Hans Sloane, Edmund Halley, were among those whose signatures were appended to this testimonial. As the newspaper in question is very scarce; as barely one in one thousand of the readers of Household Words will ever have an opportunity of seeing it; and as John Houghton is really worthy of being held in remembrance as a remarkable man, we will forthwith introduce him.

In September, sixteen hundred and eighty-one, appeared the first number of a modest little periodical, purporting to be Mr. John Houghton's Collection relating to Husbandry and Trade. It was, as near as may be, equal in the size of the page to the Notes and Queries of our modern days; and each sheet, of eight such pages, were sold for one penny. Sometimes a number contained two sheets. They appeared about once a month, occasionally at longer intervals. His first volume ended, John Houghton made a movement towards the collecting of what, in these our days, we should call statistics. He said: "I have printed a letter, which, as I shall be recommended, I design to send to ten or twenty thousand persons, from whom, what account I receive, tending to the increase of husbandry or trade, shall be faithfully pub-

lished, either with or without their names, as they please to signify the same to me. With all my correspondents I shall deal fairly and ingenuously, professing myself, excepting only some necessary remarks and transitions, to be merely editor." Thus armed, he started boldly into larger essays, gave numbers consisting of two, four, or six sheets each, and published at wider intervals. What occurred in John Houghton's private affairs, or to what extent the disturbed state of public affairs affected him, does not appear; but a long silence ensued. During the whole of the reign of James the Second, and for some years afterwards, no Collections in Trade and Husbandry were given to the world. When revived in sixteen hundred and ninety-two, they put on a wholly new dress: the sheet appeared as a small folio of two pages, published twice a week. But this proved to be an enterprise of too much boldness, the rapidity of publication was too great; and, at length, the plan settled down to a form which was steadily maintained during a period of more than ten years, from sixteen hundred and ninety-three until seventeen hundred and three, viz., the publication of a weekly sheet every Friday.

John Houghton ended his editorial labours with the frankness and straightforwardness which had marked his whole conduct of the work. In his final sheet, forming the final number of the nineteenth folio volume, he announced it to have been his intention to extend the series to twenty volumes; "but truly," he adds, "since beside my trade of an apothecary, wherein I have always been, and still am diligent, I have fallen to the sale of coffee, tea, and chocolate, in some considerable degree, I cannot without great inconvenience to my private affairs, which must not be neglected, spare time to carry on this history." Nothing but a hearty yearning for the well-being of his country, in material and industrial progress, could thus have led a man, during a period of twenty-two years, to search out and publish all kinds of curious facts that might have a practical value; and we cannot but respect the good sense which led him manfully to announce the reason for bringing his editorial duties at length to a close. It was a virtual fulfilment of a promise made to himself and his readers more than twenty years earlier, when his enterprise began, and when he stated his plans, "unless it shall interfere with my employment, and prejudice the honest care of my family, which is a topic I shall never part with." Nor was he wanting in the calm philosophy so necessary as a stay and prop against disappointments. He tells us he wrote and collected, in the hope of attracting the attention of high personages to the possibility of making many national improvements; "but if these things are not or will not be understood, I'll noways fret myself, well knowing that I fare as well as a great many persons, whose charms are not heard though they charm never so wisely." Being a member of the agricultural committee of the Royal Society, John Houghton announced his main purpose to be "to cause this kingdom to be well husbandry'd;" and, in order to attain this end, he hammered into the agricultural brain an amount of information touching earths, manures, tilling, planting, sowing, meadows, pastures, orchards, gardens, woods, coppices, cereals, fruits, hay, cattle, poultry, bees, and silk-worms, quite remarkable, considering the age in which he wrote. But he did not stop there; he went into the regions of trade as well as those of husbandry.

John Houghton had a sagacious eye to the commercial importance of number-publishing, now so well understood by all our bibliopolists—"The reason why I shall publish these in small parcels often, shall be to the end, that they may do the greatest good in the least time; and that not only the theoretical gentleman, but also the practical rustic, may enjoy their benefits; and it is also possible, that if this way causes a greater consumption, as I reasonably think it will, the bookseller and I may have the better understanding."

It would be almost as difficult to say what is not, as what is, discussed in these papers, which John Houghton collected—probably in the scraps of time intervening between his compounding of medicines and making of pills, at the sign of the Golden Fleece in Eastcheap. Clitheroe might be improved. Core in a cow's udder, its cure. Brick, the manner of making it. Bounty Act, a great advantage. Dearness of provision to be wish'd for. French King a provident father of his country. Lambs, their manner of fatting. Manure, the manner of making it. Protestant French advantageous. People may be increased by the destruction of wood. Plain-sailing, made more plain. Small-money, a proposal to supply its defect. Taxes, the reason of them in Solomon's time. Wood-growing within twelve miles of a navigable river, a great damage to the kingdom. Ireland growing rich will be for the safety and power of England. French bread, the manner of making it. Knowledge of the quantities of goods exported and imported, advantages thereof. Grass long grew by Drapers' Hall. Engine that will wind eight skeins at a time. Kingdom not enriched by our trading among ourselves, alone. Proposals made to increase wealth by subscriptions for lives. Turnips fatten sheep. Land and labour cheap, doth not always get a trade to a country. Salt cures rot in sheep.

Nothing came amiss to Houghton, if it appeared to bear on husbandry, trade, productive industry, or political economy. He obtained apparently, from the Custom House, returns of the imports and exports of com-

modities, and at first incorporated this information with his Essays; but in the second volume he separated these materials, and gave one pennyworth of Essays, and two-pennyworth of statistics monthly.

When his work assumed its folio dress, four years after William of Orange became king, John Houghton asked earnestly for letters and communication from all parts of the kingdom, that he might render his publication as useful as possible. Seldom did a man propose more to himself than Houghton then proposed. "It is intended to stop the mouth of the tenant that causelessly complains; and to open the eyes and heart of the over-hard landlord, when the tenant justly does so. To inform the corn-merchant, mealman, baker, brewer, feeders of cattle, &c., when 'tis best to buy; and the farmer or maltster when best to sell. To teach a rule of selling beasts in one county, according to the price of hay in all the rest. To inform, not only those who live in port, but such who live at a distance, the best time of laying in their coals. To do the like for hop-merchants, soap-boilers, tallow-chandlers, wool-merchants, and their customers." But this was only a small part of his plan. His weekly sheet was to give the prices of all the chief commodities at the principal towns; the prices of such stocks and shares as were at that time in existence; the chief results in the London Bills of Mortality, for the information of physicians and surgeons; the departures and arrivals of shipping in the Thames; the values and quantities of goods imported and exported; the chief known facts concerning the trade and commercial progress of other countries; the chief varieties of weights and measures used in different countries. All these multifarious details were superadded to the letters and essays concerning the raw materials of industry, the principal trades and processes, the operations for draining and flooding, the making and repairing of roads, the construction of bridges and fountains, and, "in short," as Houghton expresses it, "all useful things fit for the understanding of a plain man."

Not only was Houghton's folio, during the ten years of its existence, a newspaper and much besides; but he anticipated an institution which is of great importance in these our modern days — the commercial news-room. He announced that he would collect into large books, and orderly arrange, the whole of the information which he gradually accumulated on all the above endless topics, much more in quantity than could be inserted in the weekly folio sheet; and that those great books would be open for reference at his own house, aided by his own personal assistance, to those who might be in search of information. This news-room and library of reference appears to have been in Bartholomew Lane behind the Royal Exchange, from whence Houghton afterwards removed to the "Golden Fleece at the corner of Eastcheap and Gracechurch Street."

The opinions often expressed by John Houghton and his correspondents on subjects which would now be called Political Economy were exceedingly curious: opinions, some of which have since been dethroned, while others still occupy the battle-field of antagonistic writers and statesmen. In one of his Essays he lays down that proposition that dearness of provisions is a thing to be wished for, as an advantage to the nation. He finds links of a chain—dearness, industry, plenty, laziness, and scarcity—leading again to dearness as a re-commencement of the chain; and so on in a recurring series. Taking plenty instead of dearness as the commencement of the chain, he argues thus—"When a man has plenty, he becomes lazy: he does not work so hard as before. He says, 'Soul, take thy rest!' When the makers of silk stockings have a great price for their work, they have been observed seldom to work on Mondays and Tuesdays, but to spend most of that time at the ale-house and nine-pins. The weavers it is common with them to be drunk on Monday, to have their heads ache on Tuesday, and their tools out of order on Wednesday. As for the shoemakers, they will rather be hanged than not remember St. Crispin on Monday; and it commonly holds as long as they have a penny of money, or a penny-worth of credit." Therefore, plenty begetteth laziness. Then, what does laziness beget! All the world can tell. "We live not in the isle of Lubberland, where fowls fly into our mouths ready roasted." We must work in order to obtain; and, if we work not, nothing we shall have. Therefore, laziness begetteth scarcity. Then, what does scarcity beget? Sometimes scarcity sends commodities out of use altogether; but this cannot be the case with the great necessaries, which man must have, or die: the urgent call for them varies prices, which the sellers take good care to keep up. Therefore, scarcity begetteth dearness. Then, what does dearness beget? Every man looks about, and seeing the difficulty of buying at such high prices, sets to work more busily than before, to earn more money wherewith to buy. "Need makes the old wife trot," and she trots to a much better purpose than before. "The journeymen shoe-makers at this time will be their masters' most humble servants, and do almost what they will ask them, for hopes of a little work. Therefore, dearness begetteth industry. Then, what does industry beget? Why, an abundance of everything, since it is by industry that everything is produced. Manufacturers not only pay for what they want immediately, but they accumulate a store at a low price, with a hope of selling at a profit by-and-by. "Shoemakers make shoes now for tenpence the

pair, whereas they were wont to have fourteen-pence; and it is a common thing, when manufacture is cheap, for the rich tradesman to buy and throw by, saying:—'Hang it, it is hard if it won't pay interest: it will fetch money one time, or other.' I know a weaver, at this time, hath five thousand pieces of ribbon by him, and still employs his work-folk, although it is with a pretence to keep them." Therefore, industry begetteth plenty, and thus the five spokes of the wheel go round—plenty, laziness, scarcity, dearness, industry—plenty, laziness, scarcity, dearness, industry — each producing the others in determinate order. John Houghton had a notion that the king could keep the spokes dearness, industry, and plenty uppermost, by encouraging fashion, granting bounties on exportation, and increasing consumption by various artificial means.

Others of Houghton's economical views have grown very much out of fashion. He defended prodigality; he defended good living; he defended high duties. The startling dogma that, "Those who are guilty of prodigality, pride, vanity, and luxuries, do cause more wealth to the kingdom than loss to their own estates," he defends, by saying that whatever the prodigal spends, it is in matters either native or foreign. "If native, there can be no prejudice to the whole; because, it being but one, and he a member of that one, he gives it to himself; for I think it is universally granted, that whatever any country spends of its own, if it be capable of a supply, will never hurt it; nay, to consume a great deal will be a conveniency, if not an advantage, by finding employment for a great many idle people. If foreign, that will also be a great advantage, as well as a security to the nation." John Houghton was, however, too honest to allow his economics to blind his morality. He condemned the prodigality which touched the conduct and character of the spendthrift as a man, however much he disputed it to be a national evil in its economical results.

Many of his observations on men and things were very shrewd, and in advance of his age. It appears that the trade between England and Scotland during the reign of William and Mary was very small; and Houghton commented on the fact in a peculiar way. Only sixty-six vessels of all kinds came to London from Scotland in the year sixteen hundred and ninety-four. "How!" he exclaims; "what no more from so near an ally? Two hundred and twelve from little Holland, about sixty-six from great Scotland. It's like sisters; we envy one another's prosperity, and wish well to anybody rather than to each other. Sixty-six! Methinks it sounds like the mark of the beast; and beasts we are—homo homini lupus." Houghton adverts to a triple league, at that time maintained between England and some of the continental powers; and thus expresses an opinion which has a whole budget of wisdom wrapped up in it; "I have a long while thought that a triple league and right understanding between, and improvement of, England, Scotland, and Ireland, would be better for us than any league Christendom can afford beside. But public and private interests do seldom gradiate." From other remarks made by him, it seems evident that Scotchmen and Scotch productions were in that day much discountenanced in England. "If it be good for us to have Hull (commerce), would it not also be good to have Scotland, by a prudent management, laid to us? When does a great market prejudice any place? I have heard that twenty thousand Scots yearly go abroad to seek their fortunes; would it not be well for us to have them come hither, whereby our country and plantations may be better supplied? Some will say they are poor, and will eat up our fat; but what reason is there to think they will e'er carry it to their own country?"

In another of his essays he lays down the proposition that, "It is better for England to have Ireland rich and populous, than poor and thin;" and after arguing in defence of that maxim, he winds up by saying, "Let us every all, as much as may be, encourage Ireland, till it grows so rich, that, by being twisted into a cord with England and Scotland, it may be too strong for all foreign powers, either to break or weaken—which is the hearty wish of John Houghton."

That this remarkable gentleman, naturalist, apothecary, statist, fellow of a learned society, editor, and grocer, was thoroughly in earnest in the wish above expressed, there can be no sort of doubt; and as little can we distrust him when he says, "That knowledge may cover the earth as the water covers the sea, is the hearty prayer of the world's well-wisher, John Houghton."

We have purposely refrained from all mention of the advertisements which John Houghton was instrumental in giving to the world, in order that they may form a dainty dish to be served up on a future occasion.

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JUSTICE AT NAPLES.

At the present moment, a large share of the world's attention is directed to Italy, and more especially to Naples, where the atrocities committed by the government in the name of order and the divine rights of kings, are loudly calling for redress; while naval squadrons are assembled in the Mediterranean to awe the tyrant, and reduce him to policy more just and humane. We purpose to give a short sketch of the state of things there, and leave to our readers the task of drawing their own conclusions from the facts.

It will be remembered that, in eighteen hundred and fifty-one, Mr. Gladstone published two letters to Lord Aberdeen, giving an account of four months' residence and inquiry into the condition of affairs at Naples. His statements were first privately communicated to the Neapolitan government, but remained unnoticed by it. He had no alternative, therefore, but to publish them for the sake of common humanity. An official reply emanated from Naples; but, like many other official documents, it was full of mystification and untruth. Mr. Gladstone rejoined, and the correspondence dropped; but the events of the succeeding five years have more than confirmed his assertions. With an alteration of names in a few cases, and with no alterations at all in others, events recorded in eighteen hundred and fifty-one, are true of eighteen hundred and fifty-six. Thus the letters may be safely taken as the basis of our account; and, being now out of print, a resumé of them may not be unacceptable.

The acts of the Neapolitan government are objected to as contrary to the laws both of the State, and of natural justice. In January, eighteen hundred and forty-eight, the king voluntarily gave a constitution to his subjects, providing, among other things, that the monarchy was to be limited, constitutional, and under representative forms, with the legislative power residing jointly in the king and the national parliament. But, chiefly, article twenty-four declared that "personal liberty is guaranteed. No one can be arrested except in virtue of an instrument proceeding in due form of law from the proper authority,—the case of flagrancy or quasi-flagrancy excepted. In the case, by way of prevention, the accused must be handed over to the proper authority within the term, at farthest, of twenty-four hours; within which also the grounds of his arrest must be declared to him." In May of the same year, a struggle occurred between the king and his people, in which the former gained a complete victory. But he renewed the constitution, and declared it irrevocable, nor has it ever been formally abolished. How he has kept the promise made under the most solemn oaths, we are now about to inquire.

The great instrument of tyrannical government is the police; not the respectable and trusty force which exists in our own land, but one which is feared and hated by all who come in contact with it, and which sometimes even despises itself. An anecdote will best confirm this. Bolza, a well-known police-agent at Milan, died a year or two ago. In the revolution of eighteen hundred and forty-eight, the private notes of the government were discovered; which, after a number of not very flattering epithets, described him as understanding his business, and being right good at it. In his will, however, he forbids any mark to be set over his grave, his sons to enter the police force, or his daughters to marry any member of it. Let it also be borne in mind that at Naples the head of the service is a cabinet minister; and, as shown in the instance of Mazza—who lately, in his official capacity, insulted a member of our embassy—of great influence, and on intimate terms with his royal master.

How does this police act? So far from an arrest being made according to law, upon depositions and a warrant, it is a purely arbitrary seizure of all whom the government wishes to get rid of. The victim is brought to the police-office, questioned and bullied till he utters something which can be wrested against him; false witnesses are employed; counter-evidence refused; and, at last, a statement thus obtained is embodied in a warrant, and the arrest becomes legal,—at least, as to the letter of the law. Were the process speedy, and a fair trial possible in the end, the evil would be less. But sixteen months is the shortest time Mr. Gladstone ever heard of as elapsing before the accused is put on his trial; and in the present year, Mignona and his fellows have been con-

demned fifteen months after arrest. The cells in which these unfortunate detenuti are confined, are so loathsome that the surgeons will not enter them; and the sick and half-dead patient is made to toil upstairs to receive medical advice. The food allowed is also nauseous; and common felons are crammed with political offenders at night, to sleep as they can, in a low, dark, unventilated room. Judge Peronte was treated even worse, for he and two other men were kept for two months in an underground cell, eight feet square, and with one small grating through which it was impossible to look out; nor were they allowed to leave the cell for any purpose whatever. Similarly, the Baron Porcari was immured till his trial in a dungeon twenty-four feet below the level of the sea. And, but a few weeks ago, I heard Captain Acutí declare that he had flogged uncondemned prisoners by order of the government; yet such treatment is expressly forbidden by law. Now, it must be distinctly remembered that the victims selected for this terrible persecution are not a number of violent low-born republicans, but the middle class, the strength of the state; and, as few of them have independent property, and confiscations sometimes take place on arrest, each prisoner or refugee becomes to his friends the centre of a circle of misery. Out of one hundred and forty deputies who came to the Parliament at Naples, seventy-six were in confinement or exile in eighteen hundred and fifty-one; and the rest only purchase liberty by absolute submission to the royal will. On the other hand, the lazzaroni, the lowest class in the state, and probably in the world, are flattered and caressed, and were slipped like bloodhounds, in eighteen hundred and forty-eight, on their unfortunate countrymen. An occasional largess, and, in great crises the promise of plunder, suffices to repress their strength, or to arouse it when required on the side of the king; while those orders whose intelligence and moral force the government not unnaturally dreads, are specially thinned out and intimidated. A system like this is evidently suicidal, but it is, nevertheless, one which calls for the serious attention of all who have the power to abolish or restrain its excesses.

The prisoner is next brought before his judges; and here we may shortly describe the Neapolitan Bench. In the trial just concluded at Naples, the judges are said to have behaved more kindly and independently than usual. But, on the whole, the courts are as servile and untrustworthy as when Mr. Gladstone attended them. English judges are models of learning and integrity, selected from the highest ranks of the bar. Neapolitan judges, on the contrary, are under-paid, of an inferior grade of the bar, and hold office during the royal pleasure. Thus, they are mere creatures of the court; and in several instances have been summarily dismissed for presuming to acquit men whom the government had accused. Navarro, who was President at Poerio's trial, induced the other judges by such threat to convict the ex-minister and his fellow-prisoners, though one of the charges against them was conspiring to kill Navarro himself; a fact which in any other country would have prevented him from acting at their trial as chief judge. The same man also, when a witness was suspected of not even knowing by sight the prisoner he was accusing, and was therefore asked by the counsel to identify him, affecting not to hear the question, called out, "Signor Nisco, stand up! the court has a question to ask you;" and by this convenient interference rendered the desired proof of the witness's perjury impossible. On another occasion, the serious illness of a political prisoner suspended the sittings of the court for some days; but Navarro compelled the medical attendants to certify his convalescence, and the poor creature himself to be carried on a chair into court, where he was brow-beaten and accused of feigning to be ill, until the surgeons insisted on the immediate danger to his life unless speedily removed to his cell. In a few days he was laid in his grave. Finally, special courts are held for the sake of dispatch; and on such occasion, many forms most valuable to a prisoner are dispensed with. This happened in the instance of Poerio; and thus about forty persons were deprived of valuable aids for the sake of the expedition, after having been eighteen months and upwards awaiting their trial.

Carlo Poerio is the son of a distinguished lawyer, an accomplished man, and of unblemished character. Under the constitution he was a minister of the crown, enjoying the king's full confidence, his advice being asked even after his resignation. His principles were certainly not more liberal than those of Lord John Russell; but when the king determined to over-ride the constitution, it was necessary to get rid of him. In July, eighteen hundred and forty-nine, therefore, an anonymous letter warned him to fly; which, if he had done, it would have been taken at once as an acknowledgment of guilt. He remained at his house, and next day was arrested. His offence was not told him, as it should legally have been, although, in a week's time, he was brought up for examination. A letter was put into his hand, alleged to have been received by him from the Marquis Dragonetti, and containing of course the most treasonable expressions. The marquis is an accomplished man; but, in this letter, had been guilty of mis-spelling and of ungrammatical sentences. Besides, he had given all his names and titles in full, and committed the strange imprudence of sending his treasonable document by the ordinary post. To confirm suspicion of forgery, some real letters of his were found among Poerio's papers, and, on being compared with the seditious letter, they proved it to be a

forgery of the clumsiest kind. This being the only charge set up against Poerio, he ought, in justice, to have been released, and his accuser committed in his stead. But the document was simply laid aside, and Poerio remanded until another accusation more successful could be prepared. Meanwhile, he lay for eight months in ignorance of his crime and fate, in dungeons such as we have described, every effort being made to entrap him or other prisoners into statements which could be used against him at his trial. Pecheneda, chief of the police, and a cabinet minister, examined prisoners in secret and without witnesses for this purpose; and on one Carafa refusing to make a false charge against Poerio, though bribed by the promise of his own release, Pecheneda exclaimed, "Very well, sir, you wish to destroy yourself; I leave you to your fate." At last three witnesses were found willing to charge Poerio with treasonable acts.

The accusation was, that he was a chief of the Unita Italiana, a republican sect, and intended to murder the king. Margherita, one witness, incautiously deposed that Poerio had been expelled the society for proposing to keep up the monarchical constitution, so that his evidence was, of course, unavailable. Romeo, another witness, was chief of the sect; but that was in contradiction of the third witness, Jervolino; and, besides, Romeo's evidence inculpated Bozzelli and Torella, who were both cabinet ministers when that evidence was given. On Jervolino's statement alone, therefore, was Poerio to be condemned; no advantage being allowed him for the discrepancies in the evidence of other two witnesses, nor in that of Jervolino himself. This man had been refused some office by Poerio, and he now stated that the latter had helped him instead in getting enrolled in the Unita Italiana. But he could not recollect the forms or oath of the sect, or say anything as to the certificate of initiation alleged to be indispensable for every member to possess. After a number of other exposures on cross-examination, he stated that Poerio had made him a political confidant—among other occasions, on the twenty-ninth of May, eighteen hundred and forty-nine. Poerio produced a written report on himself, made by Jervolino to the police as their spy, and proved that it had fallen into his hands seven days previous to the alleged conversation—thus showing the absurd improbability of Jervolino's assertion. The evidence of the sole witness against him, in fact, had utterly broken down. Yet he gained no benefit from this circumstance, nor was he allowed to bring counter-evidence on his own side, except a single witness, who, if possible, added to the discredit of the infamous Jervolino.

All these facts are attested by Mr. Gladstone, who was present at the proceedings. Yet by such means it was that Poerio and his co-accused were condemned, and have since been made to undergo punishments of the severest and most degrading kind. Removed to the Bagno of Nisida, they were crammed, to the number of forty, into a room about thirteen feet long, nine wide, and eight in height, with a single small and unglazed window, one side of the apartment being under the level of the ground. Mr. Gladstone saw Poerio while here, but could scarcely recognise him, so changed was he from confinement and ill-health.

At the present moment Poerio is in a cell so foul that bread turns green in twenty-four hours; his constitution is undermined; one of his companions has died of consumption, another is paralysed, and Poerio himself has been operated upon for the tumours raised by his chains. Chains are a punishment introduced with special reference to his case, but with a transparent device to make it appear otherwise. An order was given to chain all prisoners at Nisida committed since a certain date, by which Poerio and his fellows were included. The chains are double; one about six feet long connects the prisoners by their waists, around which a strong leathern girdle is worn, and from which also descends the other chain to the ancle, the combined weight being about thirty-five pounds for each man. Their felon's dress is arranged so as to be taken off without removing the chains, which, in fact, are never unfastened for any purpose whatever. Thus, no relief is obtained, except by shifting the girdle higher and then lower on the waist; a device which has not protected Poerio from tumours and sores, to say nothing of the mental distress a man of his education must feel at being treated worse than the vilest felon. Other indignities which neither decency nor space will permit us to mention, are daily endured by him, and by others who are constantly meeting with a similar fate. Body and mind must at length give way under such treatment; a result as sure, but more silent than a public execution, and one which the Neapolitan government, perhaps, is not unwilling to produce.

In spite of all this tyranny and ill-usage, affecting thousands directly, and the whole nation indirectly, King Bomba is most strict in his religious duties (as was, occasionally, the wicked and superstitious Louis the Eleventh), and a firm supporter of the Church; which in its turn has supported him. The worst of men will, if possible, give an appearance of right and justice to their actions; an involuntary homage paid to virtue by vice. Ferdinand the Second, therefore, defends his system on the grounds of order, and the divine right of kings; taking care that the rising generation shall be well instructed in such doctrines, and look upon constitutional government as blasphemy. Accordingly, a catechism has been drawn up by an ecclesiastic, named Appuzzi, who is, or was, Chief Commissioner of Public Instruction, and or-

dered to be taught in all schools in the kingdom, and well instilled into the minds of candidates for orders. Throughout it denounces the liberals, most of whom would, in this country, be called liberal conservatives, and says plainly, that they and theirs are in the direct road to eternal perdition. In a democracy it declares there can be no obligation to obey the laws, for otherwise the governing power would reside in the governed, a state of things directly opposed to the will of God; but which argument we may add directly begs the question, denies the existence of a sovereign power in a country like the United States, and encourages anarchy in the name of religion. The gist of the book, however, is such a definition of royal authority as to excuse, or even to praise, the perfidy and oppression of the King. His power is pronounced unlimited in right as well as in fact, and the people have but to obey it, as a revelation from Heaven.

MY BROTHER ROBERT.

I.

His was a disappointed life, I have heard people say; but I, who lived with him from the beginning to the end of it, can assert that it was not a disappointed life nor an unhappy one. Certainly not. What can a man want to see more in this world than the accomplishment of his plans, for which he has toiled early and late, expending on them all his youth, hope, health, and energy? That others profited by his inventions, and grew rich on them, while he remained poor, neglected, and obscure, is a mere secondary consideration. It was his work that he looked to, and not any possible rewards that it might bring him; and as he brought his work to a fair completion, and did his share of good in his day and generation, he had no right to be dissatisfied; and he was not dissatisfied. I know it for a fact—he has told me so many a time. He would say: "Don't complain, Mary. You might complain if I had failed altogether, but I have done my work, and that is enough. I declare I feel a proud man sometimes when I see what grand things my invention is helping others to do." I was less easily satisfied for him than he was for himself; but when I saw that murmuring really troubled him, I tried to keep my tongue quiet.

People come now and look at his grave under the yew-tree, and go away and say they have seen it; and that is all the honour and profit my brother, Robert Janson, ever reaped from his life's labour. A year or two back some strangers came and proposed to put up a monument over his grave; but I warned them not to meddle with it as long as I lived. He would have been an old man now; but he died at thirty-seven: young, certainly—I grant that, and poor; because in his last broken-down years I had to support him—but not disappointed. He would never allow it living, and I will not allow it since he is dead. His was not a disappointed life. It will do no one any harm to tell his story now; and it will give no one any pain. I am the only person left in the world who ever had any interest in him.

II.

We were a large family altogether, living in the farmhouse at Alster Priors: my grandfather and grandmother, my father and mother, Aunt Anna, and five children. This period, of course, dates as far back as I can remember. I was the eldest and Robert was the youngest. The others were Charles, who succeeded to the farm—Mark, who enlisted for a soldier, and was we believed, but were never sure, killed in Spain, fighting with the French—and John, who died a boy. We got our first schooling in the village: reading, writing, and cyphering, and nothing more that I can call to mind. It was thought learning enough in those days amongst the yeoman class of farmers to which we belonged. From quite a little one, Robert seemed different from the rest of us, who were homely, contented folks, and everybody but my mother and me—Aunt Anna especially—made a point of discouraging his studious ways and ridiculing his fancies. Perhaps there was no greater trial in his much-tried life than the consciousness that his own family had no faith in him. Nobody but we two had patience with him. His grandfather, father, and brothers, regarded him as a fool and idle ne'er-do-well.

I very well remember his asking my grandfather one night, "Have you ever been to London, grandfather, or seen any of the great steam-ships and manufactories?" And "No, thank God!" was the fervent answer. This emphatic thanksgiving might be regarded as an epitome of the family sentiments: the gratitude of our elders for similar blessings was hourly expressed. They were strongholds of prejudice, and it was as difficult to effect a change or introduce an improvement amongst them as it is to overturn the fixed idea of a monomaniac. They had all, except my mother, been born in Alsterdale, and had vegetated there contentedly in unimpeachable respectability, never travelling more than a dozen miles from home: there they would die, and there be buried in a good old age. They were proud, too, and that with the most impracticable pride; for they gloried in their ignorant prejudices, and would not have exchanged them for the wisdom of Solomon. Living from generation to generation on their own farm-lands of Alster Priors, in the midst of a scanty and illiterate population of labourers, above the small farmers and beneath the great gentry—on a sort of debateable ground between both—they were isolated almost entirely from society, and secluded in a dignified insignifi-

cance, which their hereditary integrity alone kept from being ridiculous. They felt contempt for all new-fangled ideas; being unable to bring their own to any other standard than that which allows worth only to what has been long established.

Sometimes, like a puff of a wind beyond the Fells, the story of some great invention came to disturb the calm torpidity of their existence. Then they would rouse up, wonder what the world was coming to, and hope it was not a tempting of Providence for mortal man to attain to such knowledge and to work such strange and powerful devices. My father, especially, was a lover of all things old: old books, old customs, old fashions, and old-fashioned manners. Sir Roger and the Widow, Uncle Toby and Squire Western, might have been the personal friends of his youth, from the figure they made in his talk. He always addressed my mother as dame, and the servant women as lasses, speaking in a loud voice and broad accent that often made my mother wince. She was south country born and bred, and had been left as ward to the care of my grandparents, who, not knowing what else to do with her, married her to their son. She was younger than my father and pretty; but so quiet, delicate, and reserved, that Aunt Anna was mistress of the house much more than she. Aunt Anna was a big, strong-featured woman, of great decision, and, as our family considered, of great learning also. She knew the names and properties of plants, was cognisant of signs in the weather, an interpreter of dreams and mysterious appearances in the sky: she was the oracle of Alsterdale, besides being a cunning hand at raising a pie and making conserves, jellies, and custards. My brother Mark—the wild one—was her favourite; Robert she had not any love for, nor he for her. She was very fond of power, and always seemed most at ease with herself when she was either ruling or thwarting somebody.

III.

Robert was fond of the wheelwright's and carpenter's shops much more than of bird-nesting and nutting, like his brothers; and Willie Paxton has often said that at ten years old he could handle his tools like a man. It was in those places that he got his first knowledge of mechanics; the schoolmaster, who, for the time and place, was a well-instructed person, brought him on in mathematics; and our rector, who always would have it the lad was a genius, and worth his three brothers put together, lent him books and papers that gave accounts of inventions and things in science, as well as biographical sketches of men who had been distinguished in such matters. Robert used to like to call our attention to the small beginnings some of them had risen from; and Aunt Anna would always try to spite him by saying that he need not let his mind hanker after those folks, for he was to be a farmer, and farm the Little Ings land. But Robert was the pleasantest-tempered creature in the world, and never would be led into retorting on her. Sometimes, in his waggish way, he would draw her on to talk of herself, and would try to enlist her in his own pursuits; but she was too wary to be flattered by a boy, and he made no way with her.

One morning, Aunt Anna, Robert, and I, were all three in the garden picking camomile flowers, a large bed of which supplied the family pharmacopeia, when one of these talks took place. Robert asked Aunt Anna how far from Alsterdale she had ever travelled? She replied that when she was young she had been at the Richmond balls, and that once she had gone with her father to the place where they hang folks, which she explained as being York.

"You ought to be thankful you live in Alsterdale, Robert. Don't be always hankering after great, wicked towns," she said; "I never want to see one again as long as I live—never!"

The last generation of the Janson family had produced an unsuccessful poet, whom our grandmother said Robert was like in almost every point. We had no personal recollection of him, because he had died before any of us were born, but to my fancy and to Robert's, Uncle Paul had been heroic. Robert, always on the watch for Aunt Anna's genial moments, now ventured to say:

"I would rather be a man like Uncle Paul than a farmer, Aunt Anna; this seems such a sluggish life."

"Trash!" was my aunt's contemptuous ejaculation. "Your Uncle Paul was a poor, weak creature. What good ever came of his philanthropy and book-writing? If he had taken the Little Ings Farm that you are to have, he might have been alive now, and worth money, instead of lying in Alsterdale churchyard. Poor Paul had a good heart, but not the spirit of a mouse; don't you take him for your model, Robert, if you don't want to come to his end."

"Mr. Tate showed me a book of his, and said he was not only a fine genius, but a pious, devoted, and truly admirable man."

"Learn to appreciate the relative value of things, and have an opinion of your own. Are you to receive as gospel every word old Tate says? Just let me state the case to you." Aunt Anna dropped basket and scissors, as she rose erect in her oratorical attitude. "Your father and Paul, when they came of age, got each some money under their grandfather's will. Marmaduke kept to his farming, but Paul gathered his substance together like the Prodigal son, and went and spent it—not in riotous living, certainly, but to just as little purpose—among felons in jails and paupers in hospitals. Then he must needs publish to the world a

host of abuses that he had discovered, and make himself enemies; so, all his fine schemes came to nought, and he died as much from heart-break as neglect."

"No, Aunt Anna; his schemes have not come to nought; for what he began, other people have taken up and finished. Dr. Monson says so."

"Don't be Dr. Anybody's mouthpiece; give me your own words or none," rejoined my aunt, stooping to her task again.

"They are my words, too."

"Very silly ones they are, then. I don't want to see any of you wiser or better men than your father or grandfather before you. They have always been respected, and Paul was more laughed at than anything else."

"People don't laugh at him now. They honour him."

"Lip-worship. What is it worth, when he has been dead these thirty years? He would have starved to death, if your father had not fetched him home. What is the good of looking at a man's grave? He is a warning, not an example, nephew Robert."

"Was he happy, Aunt Anna?"

"Happy? I can't tell. He said to me, the night before he died, that nobody should take the post of an apostle of reform whose heart was not prepared for martyrdom. He did hope to do good at first, and hope kept him up while it lasted; but he had not pith enough: he was soon worn out."

The camomile gathering was over, and with a retrospective sigh to the memory of her brother, Aunt Anna took up her basket, and went into the house. Robert and I, after strolling a few minutes longer in the garden, passed through the wicket-gate and across the bridge, to the church, which stood about five hundred yards off on the hill-side. There were, and are, a great many yews in the grave-yard, and under one Uncle Paul lay with a plain slab of the gray stone over him, inscribed only with his name and age. (My brother Robert's grave is to the right of it, only marked by a low head-stone). We sat down on Uncle Paul's grave, and began to talk about him. We both admired him sincerely. As I remember my brother Robert in his boyhood, he was slight and tall, with a great forehead and bushy brown hair; his eyes were blue and his skin brown; he had what one would call a fine countenance. His temper was cheerful and kind; and with Uncle Paul's love of true and beautiful things, he had a character of more muscle and force. I always loved Robert the best of my brothers, and sympathised with his dislike to our torpid state of existence. But what could we do against the rest?

IV.

From fourteen to eighteen Robert went on fretting, fidgetting, and working alternately, until one day there was a rumour of a grand new bridge to be built over the Alster, about eleven miles above our house; beside it, where there was a fallin the water, a manufactory was going to be built for weaving of stockings. Neither good words nor ill words would keep Robert from going up there day after day, and staying till nightfall. It was in the time of hay harvest, and my father was often angry at his absence. One day he said to him in a rage, little thinking his words would be taken in plain earnest:

"If any of those engineering, architect, machine fellows will take thee, Robert, thou may bind thyself to them for life; I never want to see thy idle face again."

Robert did not come back that night, but the next morning he fetched his clothes when his father was out in the fields, and only the women at home. Aunt Anna was terribly vexed, and sent to call his father in. My mother would have had Robert go without seeing him, but the lad said:

"Nay, I've my father's leave;" and he stood up with his bonnie young face all glowing and brave, fearing none of us. "When I'm a man, Mary shall come and keep my house—won't you, Mary?" I promised him.

We were amazed to see how my father took it, when Aunt Anna told him Robert was set on going, and nothing could stay him. The two took a long look at each other, as if measuring their strength; then they shook hands. My mother cried to see it.

"If the lad will go, let him go in peace," said my father; "I can make nothing of him. Anna, fetch up a bottle of wine to drink his health at the dinner. Thy grandfather will be displeased, lad; thou'rt as wilful as ever Paul, my brother, was, and I misdoubt me that thou'll prosper as ill; but thou shall not go with a curse at thy back, my lad."

And so Robert left us.

I should be twenty-eight or twenty-nine years old at that time, and in my own mind I had a strange hankering to go after the lad and take care of him; and as if to give me my liberty, in the year that followed the old grandfather and grandmother were both taken away, and those who were left were well able to take tent for themselves. Still I don't know that I would have left home if my own mother had not said, one Christmas night, the first he was away, "Our Robert will be glad to see you, Mary. Your father and I were saying, why should you not go and stop with him for the change." My mother spoke for me as much or more than for him; but what for, has nothing to do with Robert's story; so I pass over that.

I went away to Robert at Birmingham, where he was — an ugly great town then, not what it is now—and truly, the lad was glad to have a face that he knew about him. I had a little fortune of my own, so that I was no burden on him; but afterwards, as things turned out, a help. I took three rooms in a cottage a good half-mile from the

town, and he changed to live with me. In the day he was at work in one of those vast manufactories of iron machinery;—I did see over one once, but what with the heat, the noise, and the stir, I could not tell now what it was like—and in the evenings I had him mostly with me. He was not so merry a companion as he had used to be, for his great idea had just begun to germinate, and many a silent hour I sat at one end of the table, while he at the other was working out his calculations, and making drawings of different parts of machinery. He got to making models after, and many a one did he fling down and break. There was difficulty after difficulty to overcome.

He would lecture to me about his drawings sometimes, and try to make me understand the relative power of this and that lever and wheel; and though I could have remembered at the time, I could not tell you now, if I would, one fiftieth part of what he said. This was to save labour and waste; that for safety; this for speed. It was impossible to avoid being interested in his work, seeing how his heart and soul were bound up in it. I was as eager he should succeed as he was himself. "If I do succeed, Mary, it will be the making of me; and I *will* succeed," he used to say, after every failure. And I believed he would.

V.

Months went on, years went on, and Robert was twenty-five, with his idea still unwrought out. In the midst of his hard toil and absorbing thoughts I was glad that he still kept his kind, warm, manly heart. There is a short bit in his story that I must not leave out—that about Rosie Kirwan. Her mother was a near neighbour of ours, and we had made acquaintance in our walks. Rosie came to tea with me sometimes, and that was the way she and Robert came, first to know, and afterwards to love, each other. Rosie was not so pretty as she was fresh-looking—fresh as a May morning in Alsterdale, or as a half-blown rose; a tall girl, straight and strong, with a round waist and a throat white and smooth as a marble figure; a firm step, a quick eye, and rather a breezy temper. I liked her very much; she was a frank, honest, sensible girl, and her mother had brought her up well.

They came to an agreement between themselves soon, and it was really a pleasant sight to see Robert at his work and Rosie leaning over him, bending her fine brows and setting her lips firm in a conscientious endeavour to take it all in, and then giving me a quick little glance across the table, as much as to say, "I can't understand it one bit."

Mrs. Kirwan was satisfied with the engagement, though I did not quite approve of her way of speaking of it. She said, "It is always a good speculation for a girl to marry a young man of talent and energy, though he may not be rich; he is almost sure to make some way in the world. I must confess that I should not let Rosie throw herself away on anybody; and, if Robert gets forward as he promises to do, I shall be glad to let him have her. She is a good girl."

The young things made no calculations, being content, apparently, with the present time of loving each other.

VI.

At last the day came when Robert walked into my parlour one night and said, "It is done, Mary." His face was all alight with pride and satisfaction, for Rosie was there, and, when he spoke, she marched straight up to him, and gave him a kiss. "I promised I would, Mary," said she, blushing like a rose; "I promised him six months ago;" and the shame-faced girl looked as if she had done wrong, whereas Robert vowed she had been hard as flint, and that was the very first time she had suffered their lips to meet. "Then it is a kiss for luck," said I; and Rosie was as still as a mouse all the evening after.

We had to hear about his success now. It was a grand invention we knew then, and all the world knows it now; but, there were many things to be done before Robert was to be a made man by it. I believe people are no more ready now than they were then to adopt new systems; but it had been submitted to a number of men, both scientific and practical, and they all pronounced it the finest invention of the age. He must get it patented; he must do this, he must do that, he must do the other. Words.

He bade Rosie and me good-bye, and carried his model to London—it was great expense—and there he stayed; we being very anxious all the time. To tell you the backwards and forwards work he had, the advice on one hand and the warnings on the other, would be more than I could do, or than you would care to hear. Besides, is it not known well enough, by all who interest themselves in such things, the trouble there is to get a new invention adopted?

All this time in London was lost time. Robert wanted money, and money he had not, and he was not earning any. My father had done for him all he ever intended to do, so I parted with my fortune, all but a bare maintenance, and kept him for a month or two longer, trying on all sides to get someone to adopt his invention. Nobody would or could. It was a depressed season, and there was no spirit to risk the production of anything novel and costly.

He came back to me: that time I was alone, and glad I was that it so happened. I should not have known him if I had met him in a strange place unexpectedly. All the healthy brown was gone out of his face, his skin was pallid, his eyes and temples were sunk, his clothes were hanging about him as if they had been made for a man twice his size. When he spoke, it was in a hurried, nervous way, and

his hands trembled as if he had had a stroke O, how ill he looked! It is my belief that, in the last months he had been away, he had never had enough to eat.

One stormy winter night he came, without having given me warning. He was drenched with rain, and I said to him something about the folly of walking in his bad health in such weather, and where was his luggage? He spread out his poor, thin hands, and said, with an attempt at a smile, "I carry all my possessions on my back, Mary;" and then he flung himself down into a chair, and, leaning his face on the table, sobbed like a child. I shall never forget him as he appeared that night—never, while I live. He was no more like the Robert who had left me nine months before, than the broken bits of drift-wood lying on the sea-shore now, are like the brave ship that sailed out of harbour a year ago. He could tell me nothing that night; but, next day he said that, finding he should never be able to do better for his invention, poor as he was, he had given it up to the manufacturer of machinery in whose service he had worked, on condition that he would bring it out within three years. "I don't care for profits, Mary; let us have enough to live, and I shall be satisfied," said he. You see he was so weak and worn down that his spirit was half broken.

"But Rosie Kirwan," I suggested.

He got up, and walked quickly through the room. "Don't talk about her, Mary! How long is it since she has been here?"

Rosie and her mother had been away in London ever so long, I told him.

"And they have not come back? then you don't know?——" He came to a full stop in front of me.

I said no, I knew nothing. What was there to know?

"Rosie and I have broken. I declare, Mary, it was almost a relief; for how could I keep her as she has been kept? Her mother heard how badly I was prospering, and said the engagement must be dropped. I did not try to hold her to it—she would have stood by me; but——" and the poor lad's voice broke down.

Rosie married, a year or two after, a cousin of her own: I believe it was a perfectly happy and suitable marriage.

VII.

After this, Robert had a bad illness, and his brain was affected, more or less, to the end of his life in consequence; but, the intervals between were long, and he and I together led a not unhappy life. In less than two years there was scarcely an extensive manufactory in the kingdom that had not adopted Robert's invention, and its usefulness was extended to far other and different purposes than he had designed. It was like a new principle in mechanical powers that he had discovered and developed, for others to carry forward. The person whose capital had enabled him to bring to practical results what Robert had designed, grew a very rich man speedily; he once sent Robert a fifty-pound note, and we were not in the position to refuse it. As I said before, I had parted with all but a bare subsistence. Robert was never more fit for work. We went to a seaside village, and stayed there a year or two, in the hope that the change would restore him; but it never did. He liked to sit on the sands, tracing out impossible designs with his stick, and demonstrating their feasibility to me. From the lectures I got, I ought to be one of the first theoretical machinists of the age.

There is nothing more to tell: he lived eleven years longer, and we went home to Alsterdale to my mother. My father was dead then, and Charles had the farm; and old Tate and he held long talks on Uncle Paul's grave, and—I think that's all. He frequently said, especially towards the last, "Mary, whatever people think, and however it may seem, remember, I am not a disappointed man. I have done my work."

Poor Robert's opinion may not be the opinion of those who read these lines; but it was his, and it is mine. After all these years, it matters not a thought who is right and who is wrong. I always hoped that he would be taken first, for who would have cared for him like me? I had my desire. I have outlived him more than thirty years.

PSELLISM.

It is of no use denying the fact, that the hard word, which stands at the head of this article, is an introduction from the Greek of my own hazarding, as far as the English vernacular is concerned. The French, certainly, have printed "psellisme" in their medical dictionaries, but it has never become a household word; and although professors of psellismology have existed for some time past, and are on the increase, they have not yet ventured to engrave on their door-plates "PSELLISMOLOGIST," that I am aware, nor even "BALBUTIST," if it should appear to them that a sounding title derived from the Latin would prove more attractive to passing customers. Not to veil the mystery too darkly, psellism is the act of stammering; and, as an oculist is a person who cures defects in your sight, so a balbutist would be one who remedies stuttering in your speech. As numerous advertising balbutists, or psellismologists, almost daily advance their claims to the patronage of their hesitating friends, I will indulge in a little quiet chat on the affection of psellism itself.

One of our most astute politicians, on being asked what were the surest means to succeed in society, answered, "Give good wine." The stock in the cellar would achieve the business. A man's bins would be his best introduction and testimonials. Beeswing port, cool claret, creamy champagne,

still more ruthless element. I had compressed into half an hour the opposite tortures of Dante's Inferno, and—still undecided as to whether ice or fire were the more potent demon—I took my preliminary walk, and returned to breakfast. I was then ushered into the public room, and found myself in the society of my fellow victims and of Dixit, Q.C.

Mr. Dixit, in his sonorous and declamatory manner, was inveighing against the English climate when I entered. He addressed himself to no one in particular, but was engaged in putting down the sun for making its appearance in these regions, and for supposing that it shone.

Judging from the buzz of applause which followed Mr. Dixit's sally, one might have supposed that the sun had actually slunk away, very much ashamed of himself. Lady Ursula Price—a tall, thin, keen, privileged person, who took her chocolate in front of the fire, and acted as a screen to the rest of the company—tapped applause on the fender with an unexceptionable brodequin. The two Misses Silversley—who looked very much like Naiads that had not yet come out—telegraphed applause to Silversley père in a giggle; Silversley père—a bald gentleman with an expression of bland fatuity—interjected, "Ha, ha, good!" whereupon another Silversley—fils et frère, twenty-five and blasé—expended the relics of his enthusiasm in the ejaculation "prime!"

I was sufficiently ignorant and daring to dissent from Mr. Dixit's opinion, and to suppose that I might do so upon terms of social equality. "I fancy there is a charm, after all," I said, "in the captiousness and variety of our English skies. Look at their agreeable surprises, the soft, smiling days that come upon you in February like unexpected friends, the chequered lights of half-clouded summer noons, so preferable to unmitigated glare."

When I paused there was a dead silence. I was the focus of every eye in the room. Mr. Dixit, who had recurred to the Times, which he was reading through his glass, quietly directed that instrument towards me, and surveyed me as if I had been a curiosity in a museum. Finding, I suppose, nothing to repay his investigation, he withdrew it, and said, "The House was counted out last night on the Malt Tax, Lady Ursula."

But I was not yet abashed. I detected in the face of a young lady opposite to me a sort of good-natured interest, and addressed myself to her. I hoped she was patriotic enough to come to the defence of our climate.

"What! After Mr. Dixit's condemnation?" she replied, archly.

"On account of it," I said.

She looked at me with an expression both of amusement and pity. "Do you seriously mean that you would enter the lists with Mr. Dixit?"

I was about to rejoin, but at this crisis the awful voice of the putter-down hushed every other.

"I will relieve this gentleman of all doubt on that point, Miss Martindale. There must be two parties to such an encounter, and I am as little likely to accept the challenge of your new acquaintance as to send him mine. Apropos of weather, though, Miss Martindale"—here he tempered his majesty to the capacity of feminine eyes, and became playful—"what a day for sketching. Did you see Miss Martindale's last sketch of Barnwood Abbey, Lady Ursula? Quite charming! If she will indeed tilt with me in defence of England, her best lance would be her pencil."

I could not but admire the art with which Mr. Dixit had managed to insult me without using one word that I could easily resent. Even the repartee I meditated was foiled in advance. Lady Ursula's grin of satisfaction at my chastisement, and the light laugh of the company, Miss Martindale excepted, had scarcely ceased, when the Q.C. had glided into another subject, and made retort impossible. For myself, I own to having been annoyed. I resolved, as the most dignified mark of my displeasure, quietly to ignore Mr. Dixit during my stay at Langham Park.

I was not long in detecting, by the playful wiles of Lady Ursula towards the putter-down, that he was an object to her either of wholesome fear or of sentimental admiration. The former had perhaps issued from the latter, for Lady Ursula was just the person to confound arrogance with superiority. I observed, too, unguarded moments when she could not restrain her quick acerbity of tone even when addressing Mr. Dixit. As these occasions generally occurred after that gentleman had indulged in too long or too bland conversation with Miss Martindale, I further surmised that she was perhaps the inconvenient bit of rock in Lady Ursula's current of true love which prevented that shallow stream from running quite smoothly. And, indeed, her jealousy (if she were jealous) was not unreasonable. In the first place, the relict of the late Sir Josiah Price, M.D., was decidedly sloping down from that meridian of beauty to which Miss Martindale was attaining. Again, the latter—though looking somewhat delicate from recent indisposition—had at once a sprightliness of fancy, and a composure of manner, which both won and secured your interest. She was, in fact, one of those rare persons in whom there is always something to discover. When I add to such charms those of an intelligent and pleasing face, a graceful and elastic carriage, and a bachelor uncle whose fabulous wealth was evidently destined for his niece, you may infer that Lady Ursula had tolerable grounds for apprehension.

I had resided at Langham Park for a month. New comers of the most various characters and classes had arrived in that

period; all of them, however, identified in their common experience of Mr. Dixit. Country gentlemen, the oracles of their districts, had been laughed down on questions of soil, crops, Herefords, and short-horns. Oxford men, worn-out by being chained to the oar of regatta-clubs, had been looked down by the interrogative contempt of Mr. Dixit's glass. Jaded wilful beauties, accustomed to their own way, were compassionately smiled down when they insisted on that privilege with Mr. Dixit. Sometimes he had a way of putting them down by concession—of presenting them with a right to their own thoughts, as if their minds were teething, and might be diverted by a coral.

I persevered in my resolution to avoid this gentleman without any marked result upon his health or spirits. My intention was, however, perceived by Lady Ursula, who directed frequent sarcasms against me in consequence, and produced a general impression upon our circle, that cordiality to me was a tacit affront to Mr. Dixit. The Doctor, arch inscrutable Miss Martindale, and her uncle, Mr. Clevedon—rather a guest than a patient—were alone bold enough to maintain kindly relations with me. The lady—whom I daily found more and more captivating—was in general request, and the doctor had many duties; so that I enjoyed but little of their society. Mr. Clevedon, who could be more liberal of his attentions, was a worthy but formal and prosy country gentleman of the old school. His chief topic was the pedigrees and relative standings of three old families—his neighbours—in Herefordshire. He would tell you how the first Sir Ralph Rooke was summoned to parliament in the reign of King Stephen; how the present Lord Racket Rooke inherited collaterally from the original Baron; how Tudor Manor had been confiscated by the parliament in the Civil War and given to the Woodhams; and how the Woodhams persisted in maintaining the armorial bearings of the Tudors over the gateway, and taking credit for the two supporting griffins—whereas no Woodham was ever entitled to any property in those distinguished animals; how a Prince of the Blood passing on to Wales—in order to mark his displeasure at the fraudulent appropriation of the griffins—had accepted the hospitality of Tudor Lodge rather than that of Woodham Hall; and how he (Mr. Clevedon), out of respect to the Tudors, had waived his own claim to the royal guest. The good old gentleman was Miss Martindale's uncle! but still I was bored. I longed for a new interest.

It came just before I reached that resigned torpor, that fossil state of ennui into which my baffled desires were fast hardening. In front of the house there was a terrace on which most of us used to promenade for an hour before luncheon. On these occasions the satellites of Mr. Dixit were wont to cluster round their intellectual centre, and to bask in his brilliancy.

In the outermost ring of this group I observed one day the Doctor standing arm-in-arm with a tall middle-aged man, who was evidently the latest arrival. So extraordinary were the appearance and manners of the new patient, that we indulged him, I fear, with a more frequent scrutiny than quite tallied with good breeding. His long unkempt light hair—which streamed irregularly down his shoulders—was surmounted by a small, conical, and narrow-brimmed hat. The hat itself swerved from his turbulent locks like a child rider who with inadequate knees fails to bestride his steed, and clings therefore to his neck. The head which was thus enveloped and adorned, presented, so far as we could judge, a full and ample brow; but I would have defied any one to say on a first inspection what was the character of the eyes. Now they dilated, now they blinked; now they pierced you with keen inquiry, anon they seemed as if all their light had gone inward. They appeared to preside over the muscles and limbs like the leader of an orchestra over his troupe. The mouth alternately compressed and twitching; and the arms, one moment rigid, the next galvanically active, fully corresponded to the ever-varying optics.

Mr. Dixit was declaiming against the absurd doctrine that the sale of military commissions should be discontinued, and that soldiers should be promoted according to merit and seniority. "Such a proposal is ridiculous," said he. "You must have gentlemen for your officers; and a man who has risen by merit seldom feels at home in the company of gentlemen."

"I admit that sometimes the two classes have little in common," said Miss Martindale with her quiet smile.

"Mr. Dixit always puts things so practically," cried Lady Ursula.

"So very practically," chimed a dozen voices.

"Pardon me—excuse me—I—I—don't altogether—that is—I beg to differ—"

Who is that? was the thought of all. I do not think that such words, however blandly pronounced, could have fallen on our circle without producing much the same effect as a thunderbolt. But jerked out as they were, accompanied by an ardent glance, and a series of emphatic gestures, the result was appalling. What was to be done with the new patient? for he was the delinquent. When Mr. Dixit thought proper to terminate that terrible silence, how would he deal with him? Was the offender a madman? There was some ground for that hypothesis, for when the company called the idol practical he had "begged to differ!" But if Mr. Clayton were insane would the Doctor have introduced him in public? No; that plea was unavailing. Could he be found guilty

under extenuating circumstances? Alas, there had been no provocation given! No one had addressed him. It was far from the sole impulse of his native depravity, that when homage was voted to Dixit—carried as it were by acclamation—this unhappy man had "begged to differ."

In this case society had been too deeply convulsed for Mr. Dixit to ignore the culprit. Calmly, as one who feels a crisis, but feels also that he is equal to it, our oracle transfixed Clayton with his eye, and observed, "You beg to differ, sir," you say, "from this company. I have not the slightest doubt that this company will be resigned to your doing so."

Then arose that short quick compound of a laugh and a cough which Lady Ursula meant for applause. Then arose that general hum of admiration which was sure to greet the discomfiture of Mr. Dixit's victims. Miss Martindale alone, who walked somewhat apart, was grave and silent.

But when the applause had subsided, she said, "I really did not catch Mr. Clayton's words. It might sometimes be interesting to hear a new view."

"Not if it were an absurdity," replied Sir Josiah's relict in a whisper that feigned to be confidential but was heard by every one.

"An absurdity, madam!" ejaculated Clayton himself. "Well it was my—my—it was my opinion."

"Confine yourself to the terms of the agreement," laughed the putter-down carelessly. "Lady Ursula demurred to the quality of the opinion—not to your property in it."

It is wonderful what some men may do. I thought this remark sheer ill-bred insolence. But my companions—Miss Martindale again excepted—gave it all the honours of polished wit. Mr. Clayton drew himself erect and turned on his assailant a look of dignified surprise. He seemed about to speak; but I suppose words were not ready. In another minute he relapsed into his strange contortions of face and galvanic gestures, and darted abruptly into the house.

Dr. Mason then told us with a grave look, almost amounting to reproof, that long and intense study had strained the nerves of his patient, that—buried in darling abstractions, his mind had become introverted and lost its calm healthy relations to the body. Agreeable society—added the physician—might do much for the case. The society of those who would be tolerant to a scholar's eccentricities from respect to their cause.

This hint was not altogether lost. Let me in candour state that for two or three days Mr. Dixit and his suite were not only forbearing but kind to the nervous invalid. Unhappily, however, the latter could not always hold his tongue. When certain topics were discussed he grew excited and expressed a quick and incoherent dissent from our law-giver. At first that gentleman would make a solemn pause and give a warning look to remind Clayton in whose presence he sat. But as these manœuvres only provoked a more audacious resistance, Mr. Dixit evidently felt at last that lenity could be carried no further, and that the system of putting-down must again be resorted to. Accordingly all the engines of that system were gradually brought into play—quiet raillery, keen sarcasm, curt decision, and a gaze of disdainful wonder, such as the Great Mogul might give to the fly that had settled on his nose.

I never saw a more unequal combat. Clayton was only too willing to argue. He would begin vehement sentences that lost themselves in mazes of parenthesis and never found their way out. He would attempt to prop his dislocated meaning with unwieldy crutches of gesture which tripped it up completely. His guns kicked and shook his own crazy fort — a structure which tottered to pieces at the very sound of his enemy's well-served and brilliant fire.

Miss Martindale no longer concealed her annoyance at these attacks. Her bearing became even deferential to Clayton, coldly civil to Mr. Dixit. Perhaps she instinctively knew the former better than the rest did. He talked almost coherently when she led the conversation, and sometimes there were glimpses both in his thoughts and movements of a grace strangely contrasting with his habitual akwardness.

Good-natured Mr. Clevedon and myself, too, found the poor victim conversable enough when his persecutors were absent. We made a trio one evening towards twilight, and our talk chanced upon education. Mr. Clevedon had possessed us of the important fact that all the Tudors for the last three generations had been educated at Oxford. Somehow we diverged from this starting-point to a more general discussion, with a rapidity which I dare say somewhat scandalised Miss Martindale's uncle. "Education," insisted Clayton with unwonted clearness "is too often confounded with instruction. Education, as its root, educere, shows, is to lead out—to lead out, to develop our faculties. Instruction relates to the knowledge which we acquire. And rely upon it unless our capacities are first led out or educated we shall make but a sorry use of instruction. We must live before we can learn, for—that is—I mean we must be beings before we can — you know what I mean."

"Yes," said Miss Martindale, who had entered unperceived, "I quite agree with you. It is curious, by the way, how your views agree with those of a writer in the —— Review." She handed to Clayton a well-known Quarterly, open at the page which she had been reading. "The paper is

well worth your perusal," Miss Martindale continued, "not only learned and eloquent, but high-toned and original, so earnest, too, that the writer has quite forgotten himself in his subject—a rare charm in writing—at least to me." There was a certain soft earnestness in her own tone which—contrasted with her usual spirit and life—had a bewitching effect. Clayton made an irresolute clutch whether at the book, or at the fair hand that offered it seemed doubtful. The former, once in his possession, a gleam of pleasure lit up his face. Then he sat silent, his head propped on his hand.

I have no hope whatever that I could maintain a mystery against the acuteness of my readers. The anonymous article praised by Miss Martindale was—as I afterwards learned—written by Mr. Clayton himself. I fancied that from that time a confidential feeling sprang up between them. The lady, it is true, responded impartially as heretofore to all claims on her attention; but there were some chance minutes daily when she might be seen winding down the avenue, attended only by her uncle and the eccentric student.

It cannot be supposed that this toleration—even favour on the part of Miss Martindale—escaped the notice of the putter-down. He perceived it, I am sure, with indignation, and grew so relentless in his hostilities to the nervous sufferer, that I was heartily glad to learn from the Doctor that he had ordered Clayton to abstain from society for some days, and to pursue the hydropathic treatment in quiet.

Accordingly—although we had occasional glimpses of the lonely patient as he struck across the park after his douche, or bore down homeward from the breezy wolds—we met no more for several weeks. Dr. Mason was reserved in his answer to our inquiries. The most decisive bulletin we could get from him was that he thought now Mr. Clayton would do.

One morning, shortly after this, we had a large reinforcement of invalids. A supplementary table was placed in the breakfast room, and every seat was filled. For some days previously there had been a marked relaxation in the Dixit tyranny; because, I suppose, even despotism palls when constantly exercised over the same submissive victims. Our Cæsar had given us holiday while he strove to reinstate himself into the graces of Miss Martindale, or to appease the tender jealousy of Lady Ursula. But with the new comers he was himself again. His supremacy had again to be asserted: the barbarous, who had never heard of him, had to own his yoke. Accordingly, the number of persons was that day unusually large who learned their relative position to Mr. Dixit, and who were awed and astonished into silence. These results were not always gained without a struggle; but it was the futile struggle of the swimmer against the vortex.

"Don't tell me, sir, of the mitigation of the penal code of reformatory schools for juvenile delinquents and so-forth. A boy criminal is the worst of all criminals. He begins by being bad. Crime runs in his blood. Up with him—like a fungus."

This was launched by the dictator against a mild and persistent quaker, who, essaying to reply, found that his antagonist had seemingly forgotten his existence, and was deep in a flirtation with the lady next to him.

"I think what this gentleman urged deserves attention," said a calm clear voice which produced an instant hush; "that our only remedy for young offenders is to extirpate them, is a conclusion which at all events needs strong reasons."

Mr. Dixit's glass was in prompt requisition as he sought out the speaker from the herd of nobodies with an amused smile.

"Pardon me, I forgot you were short-sighted," said he of the voice, rising composedly and taking a seat just vacated and directly opposite to Mr. Dixit's. "Now, if you please, we can discuss the matter."

The transformation wrought by the water cure had been so complete that we observed with wonder that calm smiling face, that port equally firm and courteous, that clear flexible voice, that hair, wavy but no longer wild—could all these indeed be attributes of the awkward, abrupt, grotesque being whom Dixit had expelled from his dominions?

And Clayton was now ready to discuss the matter, even with a Dixit. That gentleman—at first confounded—next bent his eyes upon Clayton, then turned them in mute appeal to the general company. With the same pantomime have I seen a phrenological lecturer point to a flat organ of veneration in the cast of one who in his lifetime had respected nothing in the earth or above it. At present, however, the spectators showed interest rather than horror. By her short, hysteric laugh, Lady Ursula evidently moved that Clayton should be forthwith convicted of impiety, but no one seconded the resolution.

Mr. Dixit thought it necessary to speak.

"Discussion," said he, "is a traffic, an interchange of ideas. I do not enter upon that kind of barter unless I am sure of an equivalent."

These words were uttered with slow scorn. The speaker was taking high ground, and such is the force of custom, a faint murmur of assent succeeded.

"A very just definition," replied Clayton. "It is one of the advantages of discussion that he who does not find his account in it may decline it. But dictation is a thing of another kind; it implies, not a commodity exchanged, but a tax imposed—in which case we may reasonably ask to look at the warrant."

The two wrestlers had entered the ring,

and Clayton had actually closed with his antagonist. The table sat with gaze rivetted on the combatants—only Miss Martindale looked down. Perhaps she had a stake in the result which she was unwilling to betray.

Mr. Dixit felt that now, if ever, he must shake off Clayton's gripe. The trial was not only one of skill, but of strength. He could not trip up this man; he would lift him from the ground, and throw him. "A dictator," he cried, "does not stoop to explain. He wields the power of a strong mind over a common one."

"But he must first prove himself strong. He must, at least, have his army and police, to put down question. If not, we may suspect him to be only a stage-king. And, even as a stage-king, he must know how to act majesty, otherwise we shall see at once that his diamonds are glass, and doubt if he have paid the supers who bear up his cotton velvet."

"This is insult!" exclaimed Dixit.

"No," rejoined the other. "If you be a real monarch, it does not apply to you; if a sham one, you made the application yourself."

"Ha! ha! ha!" from the table in general. Clasped hands and eyes that apostrophised the ceiling, on the part of Lady Ursula.

"Sir!" shouted Dixit, forgetting all decorum in his excitement, "there are opinions that we do not answer, because they outrage us. Their safety lies not in their strength, but in their repulsiveness. They do not conquer, they disgust. Your pleas for crime were of this kind."

"My pleas for reforming criminals, you should say."

"The same thing, sir. I know what this spurious philanthropy comes to."

"Yes, yes," from Lady Ursula, her arms extended in wonder and delight.

"I know what it comes to," Dixit went on. "It means sympathy with wretches, and indifference to society. You would abolish hanging, I don't doubt?"

Clayton smiled.

"And trust, instead"—here Mr. Dixit's sneer was withering—"to education—to the gradual results of moral influence."

"Perhaps so."

"Ha! ha! ha!—you admit it! And, in the meantime—mark, gentlemen—in the meantime, I might be murdered!"

"Perhaps so; no great reform was ever effected without some trifling inconvenience at the beginning."

The roof did not fall in; the walls did not give way. If they shook, it was with the laughter of the audience.

Mr. Dixit had before resembled Coriolanus in putting down the mob. He was now disposed to emulate that illustrious Roman when driven into exile. He stood at bay with the revolters. "I disdain alike, sir," said he, "your coarse effrontery and the taste of your admirers. I beg to decline giving any further encouragement to either."

He spoke. I confess, I softened to the great man in his disgrace. He looked it in the face proudly. "I banish you!" was the thought visible to all, as he drew his coat around him. It was only a coat; but the action would have suited a toga. He turned; he strode away; he was gone!

A solemn pause.

"And this is what you have brought upon us!" burst forth Lady Ursula to Clayton. "On your account Mr. Dixit will withdraw himself from us all."

"Pardon me; I scarcely aspired to be a public benefactor," returned Clayton.

Here the fickle public hilariously testified to the merits of its deliverer.

"Sir," continued Lady Ursula, with bitterness, "a sneer is not an argument. It is easy to be impertinent; but I want to hear reason. What have you to say?"

"That he who has a lady for his opponent, loses, even if he wins."

"Mere evasion," cried his fair adversary, vehemently. "I ask for an answer. Please to forget that I am a lady!"

"On the contrary, madam, I am sure you will assist me to remember it."

Clayton said this with an accent so courteous, and a bow so profound, that Lady Ursula did not at first perceive how very possible it was that she might be taken at her word. I think, however, that an inkling of this danger gradually broke upon her. She rose suddenly from her seat, walked to the French window that opened upon the terrace, and disappeared. For more than a week afterwards, Lady Ursula kept her room.

From the aforesaid window we soon discerned the Doctor's brougham dashing with unwonted velocity towards the park gates. The impetuous, overbearing vehicle, which took all the curves of the road at angles, and thundered down upon alarmed pedestrians, suggested, by a natural association of ideas, that Mr. Dixit might be on his travels. When this random guess was turned into certainty; when we learned that the putter-down was indeed hurrying on to secure the next train; devoutly did we wish the coachman good speed.

He was in time. He had driven away with an incubus that rolled from our hearts in the same degree that the carriage lessened to our eyes. He came back to us with an empty brougham, an honest, cheerful servant, quite unconscious of the moral debt we owed him. But, from that moment, we grew sociable and happy. Whether the sun felt really more free to do his best, now that he was secure from intimidation, or that we saw him with more hopeful eyes, he seemed to shine next morning with unprecedented splendour. Silent people found their tongues; timid people ventured to have opinions; repressed humourists had their jokes. We had

gipsy-parties by day, impromptu balls at night:

All went merry as the marriage-bells.

Some months afterwards, the marriage bell went indeed from the quaint old church near Clevedon Hall. It might have seemed like cruel kindness in Clayton to insist that I should be present at the wedding-breakfast; but he meant it in friendship. To me it fell to propose the health of the bride (ah, arch, rare Miss Martindale!) and groom. One part of my speech was received with distinguished approbation. It was that passage in which from the cornucopia of blessings which I desired for them, I singled out this special one: that their happy home might never be darkened by the invasion of a putter-down.

SOWING AND REAPING.

Sow with a generous hand,
Pause not for toil or pain,
Weary not through the heat of summer,
Weary not through the cold spring rain;
But wait till the autumn comes
For the sheaves of golden grain.

Scatter the seed, and fear not,
A table will be spread;
What matter if you are too weary
To eat your hard-earned bread:
Sow, while the earth is broken,
For the hungry must be fed.

Sow;—while the seeds are lying
In the warm earth's bosom deep,
And your warm tears fall upon it—
They will stir in their quiet sleep;
And the green blades rise the quicker,
Perchance, for the tears you weep.

Then sow,—for the hours are fleeting,
And the seed must fall to-day;
And care not what hands shall reap it,
Or if you shall have pass'd away
Before the waving corn-fields
Shall gladden the sunny day.

Sow, and look onward, upward,
Where the starry light appears—
Where, in spite of the coward's doubting,
Or your own heart's trembling fears,
You shall reap in joy the harvest
You have sown to-day in tears.

THE OFFICIAL BLACK SWAN.

The official black swan is the Post Office. It is the one government office that consents fairly to take the measure of its work, and to do it, in the most direct way possible. No doubt the daily friction with the entire body of the public is the cause of this, and not any inherent virtue in the Post-Office itself as a department. A few thousand inventors or a few hundred thousand colonists can easily be dealt with by routine; but the necessity of daily contact with the millions at home compels activity. Therefore it is that the letters of the present generation are not, in the ordinary course of government routine, delivered to the next: the invitation of Belinda to a ball is not doomed to wait for an application to the right department upon affidavit to the order of the deceased old lady's heirs, administrators, and assigns.

Three hundred years ago an important letter of state was more than three days and three nights on the post-road from the Archbishop of Canterbury at Croydon to the Secretary of State at Waltham Cross, a distance of sixty miles. Less than two hundred years ago, a coach and six horses, aided by a government pension, undertook the carriage of the mails in six days from Edinburgh to Glasgow (forty-four miles) and back, but found the work too arduous. Less than a hundred years ago the first mail coach was seen in Edinburgh. Twenty years ago there was no penny postage. Ten years ago there were no means of transmitting money cheaply by post. Five years ago there was no book post. Of progress of this sort, the public has a tolerably accurate impression. Nevertheless, how much advance is made from year to year, how the efficiency of the Post Office department is maintained—not by its being crystallised into a given form; but by its daily life and growth, and an incessant process of development—we have been able only lately to perceive.

This busy department, working with and for the public, has a right to demand that the public should work with and (to a certain reasonable extent) for it; the public's profit and advantage being in each case the object sought. Last year the Post Office began the plan of issuing yearly reports, whereby the community might see what it was about; and wherein and for what reason help of any kind might be afforded to it. The second of its reports has just been issued, and out of it we proceed to illustrate what we have here been saying.

We begin at once with the last year's advances. Within the twelvemonth five hundred and twenty-five new post-offices were opened for the increased accommodation of the public; and, by the appointment of rural messengers in places too small to warrant the establishment of an office, a nearer approach has been made to a delivery of letters throughout all the nooks and crannies of the country. The deliveries were extended last year to one thousand three hundred and twenty-seven places, where, before, they did not exist; and the free delivery was improved in six hundred and fifty other places. Pillar letter-boxes in the streets of towns have been tried, and found successful; therefore it is intended that their number shall be largely increased. The chief advantage is, that collections may be made from them at hours when it would be unreasonable to expect private shop-

keepers to do post-office duty. The early morning delivery has been extended to several more places round the London district; but, as regards the delivery of London letters, changes are at this moment in progress for the full success of which some little help is needed from the public. Of the whole number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom nearly a quarter are delivered in London and its suburbs; nearly half pass through the London office. To facilitate the London business and to increase despatch in the delivery, it is now proposed to get rid of the obstacle arising from the vast bulk of the metropolis, by considering London, not as one town, but as ten towns. At present, a letter posted in one part of London, and addressed to another part close at hand, may have a circuit of five or six miles to take; because the centre of distribution is only Saint Martin's-le-Grand. Letters from the country all pass through the present central office, where they are sorted once; then they must go into their several districts; and then have to be sorted again with reference to streets and houses. By treating London as ten towns, each with its own centre of operations, this difficulty will be avoided. Country letters will be delivered straightway—without passing through an intermediate sorting—to the parts of town for which they are destined; and the sorters there, having the necessary local knowledge, will distribute them immediately into postmen's walks, and forward them, at a saving of one, two, or three hours of delay, to their several addresses. So, with letters from one part of London to another. A letter from Belgravia to Tyburnia will go direct from place to place, instead of travelling ten miles to and from St. Martin's-le-Grand.

The ten towns, or independent districts into which it is proposed to divide London, are named from their relative positions. Thus in the southern district, will be included Kennington, Stockwell, Brixton, Streatham, Mitcham, and Carshalton; in the northern, Islington, Highbury, Hornsey, Enfield, and a bit of Waltham Cross. The north-western district will extend from Camden Town to Harrow; the western, from Oxford Street to Norwood; the south-western, from Charing Cross to Hampton Court and Sunbury; the eastern, from Bethnal Green to Romford. The central, east central, and west central, will include the city and neighbourhoods adjacent.

But, from country postmasters, it will be too much to expect any minute knowledge of the geography of London. Residents in London must, therefore, enable their provincial correspondents to fall in with the new scheme by appending the initial letters of their district to the usual—or indeed often less than the usual—addresses. "Liverpool Street, Bishopgate, London," will become "Liverpool Street, E. C., London," and "Hill Street, Berkely Square," will shorten into "Hill Street, W." Many addresses will be further simplified, and post-office work facilitated, when the new Board of Works has got rid of the duplicate names of streets where they occur in the same district. This appeal to the compass is not absolutely necessary to the new plan; although those letters on which it is not made, may lose the chance of early delivery.

In respect of railways, the gain of the Post Office, or the public, by their mail-trains is in the enormous advantage of their increased speed, and the power they give of getting through the sorting and the carrying, both at one time. There is no other kind of gain; on the contrary, a money-loss, for railway-companies complain that they are not paid well enough. This complaint can be hardly well-founded; for we learn that the old cost of carrying the mails by coaches averaged twopence farthing a mile, and that the average price now paid for the same service to railways is tenpence a mile; that under the old system tenpence farthing was the highest mile rate ever paid, and that it is now sometimes as high as four shillings and tenpence a mile; which is very much the same sort of thing as a charge upon passengers of four times the old coach fares for railway travelling, in consideration of the benefit of speed; with the complaint added, that such payment is niggardly and wretched. The cost of running a train may be assumed in most cases to be about fifteen pence per mile; and, upon this, the post-office inquires of the public, whether it is to be considered very stingy in paying for the use of only a fraction of a train at the rate of from sixty to two hundred and sixty per cent. in excess of the whole cost of running? The argument that the Rowland Hill system could not have existed without railways, is sufficiently answered by the curious fact that more than half the transit of post letters is still effected by coaches and carts. During the past year the average number of miles performed by railways for the post-office was twenty-seven thousand one hundred miles per week-day, at an average cost of tenpence per mile; while thirty-one thousand six hundred miles per week-day were traversed by mail-coaches and mail-carts, at an average cost of twopence farthing per mile.

We add a paragraph of miscellaneous facts. Of the whole number of Valentines sent through the post (eight hundred thousand), the supply furnished by Ireland is on the decrease. In England and Scotland, on the increase. Through France alone there passed last year two millions of letters between the people of this country and their sons, fathers, brothers and friends who had gone out to battle in the East. The number of mis-sent and returned letters in the United Kingdom has now

fallen as low as three-quarters per cent. In the colonies, however—partly through the shifting nature of the population, partly through the want of any good means of delivery among the colonists—the number of returned letters is as great as twelve in every hundred; and yet, of forty-two thousand letters thus failing to reach their destination, all but two thousand had been prepaid, and nearly fifteen hundred of them had been even registered.

The change in the stamp-tax has diminished by one-fourth the number of newspapers posted; the number of book packets is increasing rapidly, as the use of the book-post becomes familiarly known. To a considerable extent, the book packets consist of tradesmen's circulars and catalogues. The money order system is also growing very rapidly. In Liverpool there were nearly twice as many orders issued and paid in the one month of December last, in Birmingham four times as many, as were issued and paid in those towns during the whole of the year eighteen hundred and forty. The removal of some very trifling checks that had been found superfluous precautions in the business of granting and paying—slight matter as it seemed—produced an increase of money orders issued in the last quarter of last year, more rapid than had been known at any previous time.

We are glad to find that the Post Office department intends giving a full knowledge of what may be done through its agency by means of a cheap little Guide, renewed as often as proves necessary. It may not be too much to say that half the people in this country who use the Post Office do not know clearly all the benefit they can derive from it, so rapid is the healthy growth of this Black Swan among the offices.

GOLD-HUNTING.

IN TWO PARTS. PART THE SECOND.

As the great Dr. Swinburne could not leave the Medical Hall, he set himself about enclosing it with post and rail, and ornamenting it by the importation of various flowering shrubs from the neighbouring forest. He had neither mortar nor scales, nor any drugs to weigh and compound in them; so he proposed to supply himself from a druggist's not far off, should he be fortunate to obtain any patients. And these were not long wanting. Accidents were constantly occurring on the field, and George, who was prowling about for fresh claims, was sure to cry out "To Dr. Swinburne's!" and helped to carry the patient there. Adam's real cleverness was soon perceived, and practice followed rapidly. Not a word of advice was given under a sovereign, and a few doses of medicine were rewarded with an ounce—that is, an ounce of gold, value three pounds seventeen shillings.

"Who would dig?" said Adam, triumphantly, as he tossed the first real sovereign in his hands. George, you shall be tent-keeper, and cook, and we'll go halves till there's enough for you to start as a lawyer with in Melbourne; and then you shall give me halves for the first year. There! That, I know, is a good bargain for me."

George set to work in his new post. Soon, they had a Medical Hall of really grand dimensions for canvas, and not only a pestle and mortar and medicines, but Adam had his horse, and rode far and wide through the diggings. George was groom; and, as they had little to be robbed of in the tent—for Adam every evening carried his cash to the gold-office at the government camp—when Adam was on his rounds, George amused himself by felling poles in the woods just by, and peeling stringy bark, with which he soon built a stable near the Medical Hall. The horse was fed on hay and oats at a shilling a pound each; and they themselves on bread at five shillings the quartern loaf, potatoes at one shilling a pound, and fresh butter at five shillings. But what then? The gold now flowed in in a royal stream. Adam plucked out a digger's tooth—a pound; clapped a piece of sticking-plaster on a bruised arm—a pound; gave a dose of salts in a bottle of water and a little colouring matter—a pound. Nothing was done under a pound popped into the hand at the moment. A particular case, and down came "an ounce."

"Doctor," a digger would say, "just look at my leg."

"Ha! I see," replies Adam. "You must give over drinking."

"That's true," says the fellow. "But doctor, I've no money, but there's an ounce."

There was a deal of dysentery. Adam might have said with a certain doctor, "A world of sickness! Providence has been very kind to us lately!" but he was too humane. Nevertheless, he could not but exult in his unbounded success. "This is the true gold mine, Geordy; you'll soon have to be off to Melbourne, and commence conveyancer. And yet, what am I to do without you? Who is to watch my tent, and cook, and keep all straight, and have my horse ready, and in such condition? It is really a shame, George, to make a groom and butler of you; but there is nobody that can do like you. Well, a few weeks." In fact, Adam's practice was already at the rate of eight thousand a-year.

One morning Adam started up, for he had a hard day's ride before him. Typhus fever was raging in a low flat, where quantities of stagnant water had collected, and heaps of offal and all kinds of impurities were scattered over the ground, and rotted and festered in the sun. He had been there day after day for the last week, not only attending to the numerous poor people who were attacked by the fever, but in seeing

marks of thumbs and greasy sooty fingers dimly disfiguring the rich textures? That to me, is Russian civilisation.

TWO DIFFICULT CASES.

CASE THE SECOND.*

MR. FRANCIS BLANDY was an attorney-at-law, resident at Henley in the county of Oxfordshire; a gentleman sixty-two years old; a widower, with but a single child, a daughter, to whom he was devotedly attached. Mr. Blandy lived in a good house, and his household consisted of himself, Mary his daughter, his clerk, two maid-servants, and a man-servant. There were also an old nurse, a charwoman, and an old man-servant, who had become sexton of the parish, every week about the house, engaged in sundry acts of service. Mr. Blandy was a man in fair health, who had been for years troubled with heartburn, and such twinges as belong naturally to one who is found after death with a stone in his gall-bladder. Mr. Blandy and his daughter had lived very happily together; and the father, when the child came to be of marriageable age, was desirous to procure for her what he would consider a good match. To attract wealthy suitors, the attorney gave out that his daughter would have a fortune of ten thousand pounds.

Among the persons who were attracted to Miss Blandy by the prospect of ten thousand pounds was a captain in the army, who by chance came to Henley to recruit. This was the Hon. William Henry Cranstoun, a man of good address, whose mother was a titled lady living in a Scotch castle. Mr. Cranstoun, however, was a person of base character; who, having children in sundry places and a wife in one place, nevertheless insinuated himself into Miss Blandy's affections, and offered her marriage for the sake of being master of her money. The father saw great reason for distrusting Mr. Cranstoun's honesty, and therefore discouraged his attentions to the daughter. Mary, however, was enamoured of the captain, and the old gentleman was too indulgent to put any strong check upon her inclinations. Mr. Cranstoun was a guest at the lawyer's house from August to November in the year seventeen hundred and fifty, but the master of the house took no pains to disguise the fact that his visitor was there on sufferance; and, upon this topic, little quarrels frequently arose between father and daughter.

In the next turn of the story the whole difficulty lies. Cranstoun said, one morning, he had seen Mr. Blandy's ghost; which must portend his death. Miss Blandy also said she had heard strange music in the house, which was a sign of death to some one of its inmates, and she was afraid her father would not live another year. At the same time a white powder was for the first time put into the old man's tea.

* For the first case see page 385 of the present volume.

Let us say at once, as a guide to the readers of the case, that Miss Blandy declared throughout, and with an awful solemnity affirmed with her last breath that she at no time suspected the white powder (of which we shall presently find her making habitual use) to be a poison; but that it was given her by Cranstoun as a charm able to make her father favourable to his suit. Cranstoun, she said, while he was staying at their house, put a white powder into her father's cup of tea, which had been poured out before he came to breakfast. She averted her face while he did so; but observed that no ill effects followed, and therefore accepted the assurance of her lover and trusted in his honour, when he said that the charm would do no hurt. He left this assurance with her when he went away for a time, to the North. A hundred years ago credulity was common enough, and in all times girls have been credulous of the assertions of their lovers.

The facts proved in evidence make it, however, very difficult (though not impossible) to accept this solution of the case. Soon after Mr. Cranstoun's departure, Miss Blandy began to receive from the captain in Scotland letters and presents. Among the presents were occasional boxes of Scotch pebbles; and, with the pebbles, a small paper containing what was, according to its label, powder to clean the pebbles. This powder was habitually mixed by Miss Blandy with her father's tea. The invalid complained of his stomach, and was sick. He lost health so much, that a neighbour said to his wife, "I fear my old friend Blandy is breaking up." Still there was an occasional exchange of hard words between father and child, on the subject of the captain; varying a course of life that was on the whole affectionate. A servant who was proved to bear her no good-will, and who deposed that she had in coarse language, during a talk about young girls kept out of their portions, asked who would not kill a father for ten thousand pounds?—this servant admitted that she was attentive and careful on her father's behalf, throughout his illness, and did for him what she might have done for herself or any other person.

Mr. Blandy was often sick after his breakfast. A servant, who once finished tea left by him at breakfast-time, was taken ill, but not immediately after it: she attributed her illness to beans eaten heartily at dinner-time. After a time Miss Blandy wrote a letter to the captain which obtained this answer: "I am sorry there are such occasions to clean your pebbles; you must make use of the powder to them, by putting it in anything of substance, wherein it will not swim atop of the water, of which I wrote to you in one of my last. I am afraid it will be too weak to take off their rust, or at least it will take too long a time." In the same letter he talked of the beauties of Scotland,

and reported that his mother, Lady Cranstoun, had employed workmen to fit up an apartment for her at Lennel House. Soon afterwards, Miss Blandy began to put her father's powder into the water-gruel which he took for supper. The father's bodily state was becoming very wretched. Vomiting, purging, and internal ulceration tortured him. A nurse, for whom his daughter had a great deal of affection, drank one morning the gruel left by the master overnight, and was seized, before she could finish it, with so violent a sickness that the servants feared she would die in a fit. She said, while she was eating it, that the house smelt of physic, and everything in it tasted of physic. It is to be observed that, fancying one of the servants was not looking well, Miss Blandy had warned her of the unwholesomeness of water-gruel, and had said something to her fellow-servant with a like intention.

The powder was still being mixed with the gruel. A large panful of gruel for three days' consumption was prepared; and, on the third day, one of the servants declared it to be stale, and made some more. "Then," she testified, "I brought out the pan (the evening before I thought it had an odd taste), so I was willing to taste it again, to see if I was mistaken or not; I put it to my mouth and drank some, and taking it from my mouth, I observed some whiteness at the bottom. I went immediately to the kitchen and told Betty Binfield there was a white settlement, and I did not remember I had ever seen oatmeal so white before. Betty said, 'Let me see it;' I carried it to her, she said 'What oatmeal is this? I think it looks as white as flour.' We both took the pan and turned it about, and strictly observed it, and concluded it could be nothing but oatmeal. I then took it out of doors into the light and saw it plainer; then I put my finger to it, and found it gritty at the bottom of the pan; I then recollected I had heard say, poison was white and gritty, which made me afraid it was poison." Murder was out. The pan was carefully put by; taken, on the first opportunity, to a friend of the family; and shown to the family surgeon; who said he could not tell what it was, because it was wet, but thought there must be foul-play somewhere.

Now, Mr. Blandy was at this time dangerously ill, and Miss Blandy had learnt from the surgeon that he was in danger; whereupon she urged, against her father's wish, the sending for additional advice, and did send secretly for Doctor Addington. Doctor Addington, when he saw his patient, suspected poison, and asked questions which alarmed Miss Blandy. On a Saturday night, therefore, when she had directed a letter to an uncle, in the kitchen, and had made occasion to go to the fire to dry the ink, she slipped into the fire some papers and poked them down into the coals. One servant immediately threw coals on; and, as soon as the young lady was gone, from under the damp coals the two maids took a piece of paper that was only singed and that contained white powder. It was labelled in Mr. Cranstoun's hand-writing, "Powder to clean the pebbles."

Then the servants were convinced that their young mistress had been poisoning her father. One of them gave information to her master early the next morning. The powder was placed, on his next visit, in the hands of Doctor Addington; who called in a second physician, and remained all day with his patient. During that day he caused Miss Blandy to be searched and guarded. He asked the father more than once whether he really thought he had taken poison. The old man replied that he thought he had. His teeth had decayed faster than was natural, and he had—especially after his daughter had received a present of Scotch pebbles from Mr. Cranstoun—been affected with unaccountable pinchings and heats in his tongue and throat, and with almost intolerable burnings and pains. I asked him, said the doctor, whom he suspected to be the giver of the poison? The tears stood in his eyes, yet he forced a smile, and said, "A poor, love-sick girl. I forgive her. I always thought there was mischief in those cursed Scotch pebbles!"

The evidence to identify the powder in the pan and paper as white arsenic, is curiously illustrative of the difference between the chemistry of to-day and that of a hundred years ago. The surgeon believed the white powder found in the pan to be poison, "because it was gritty and had no smell." The physician tried some in his house with a red hot poker (to procure the odour of garlic in the fumes), "upon which," he says, "I did imagine it was of the arsenic kind." The physician who received the paper of arsenic, rescued from the fire, said, "I opened the paper very carefully, and found in it a whitish powder, like white arsenic in taste, but slightly discoloured by a little burnt paper mixed with it. I cannot swear this powder was arsenic, or any other poison; because the quantity was too small to make any experiment with that could be depended on." With the white powder from the pan, by trying ten grains in one way, ten grains in another way, and so using five tests on large quantities—repeating the same tests with identical results on arsenic bought as such, at a shop—he obtained sufficient certainty as to the poison used. Now, the chemist can identify the smallest fraction of a grain.

Miss Blandy, imprisoned in her room and parted from her father—who, she was told, was dying—became violently distressed. Her distress was imputed by the physicians to her knowledge of the consequences to herself with which she was then threatened. She pleaded hard to see her father once, and did see him. He received her tenderly; to her plea for forgiveness he said, "I forgive thee, my dear, and I hope God will forgive thee;

but thee shouldst have considered better than to have attempted anything against thy father; thee shouldst have considered I was thy own father."

"Sir," she said, "as to your illness, I am entirely innocent."

One of the servants then reminded her of the known facts. Miss Blandy replied, "I have put powder into tea, I have put powder into water-gruel; and, if you are injured, I am entirely innocent, for it was given me with another intent."

Her father firmly believed that. He spoke of her only as the poor love-sick girl, upon whose simplicity Cranstoun had practised. "O, such a villain!" he said, as he turned in his bed. "Come to my house, eat of the best and drink of the best my house could afford, to take away my life and ruin my daughter." But in his last words to his child, after blessing her, there was a strange mingling of the lawyer with the father: "Do, my dear, go out of my room; say no more, lest thou shouldst say anything to thy own prejudice."

The girl was taken back to prison in her chamber. She pleaded in vain. She asked afterwards for leave only to be against her father's door when he was dying. She was a monster in the eyes of all about her, and as such she was treated. On the night of her father's death, she made, to two servants, wild proposals of flight. At the time of the autopsy, she being left with open doors, she said, in the defence she was obliged to make for herself upon her trial,—"I ran out of the house, and over the bridge, and had nothing on but an half sack and petticoat without a hoop; my petticoats hanging about me, the mob gathered about me. Was this a condition, my lords, to make my escape in? A good woman beyond the bridge, seeing me in this distress, desired me to walk in till the mob was dispersed." There she was taken, and brought back to durance. The good woman so mentioned, being examined, said that when she called Mary Blandy in to save her from the mob, "she was walking as softly as foot could be laid to the ground; it had not the least appearance of her going to make her escape."

For this attempt to escape, such as it was, the prisoner was made to wear irons in gaol. Outside the gaol doors, horrible stories—afterwards confessed to be false—were told about her. She was found guilty of murder at her trial, but conducted herself with so much decorum that the prejudice of many persons was diminished. Afterwards, while under sentence, her behaviour in prison was said to be unimpeachable. She was content to suffer for having destroyed her father; but to the last, with an appearance of true sincerity, declared that she had been duped by Cranstoun, and persisted in that account of the crime, which she confirmed with an awful adjuration. Her last words were: "May I not meet with eternal salvation, nor be acquitted by Almighty God, in whose awful presence I am instantly to appear, if the whole of what I have here asserted be not true."

There are more details in this case than we have given here; but we have represented fairly the degree and nature of its difficulty. Cranstoun fled the country, and suffered at the hands of human justice no punishment worse than outlawry.

SUBURBAN BELGIUM.

The Society of the True Friends of the Belgian Lion have retired from their place of rendezvous, opposite my window, and I can write in peace. They were pleasant fellows, very!—friends, in fact, of whose attachment any lion—Belgian, or otherwise—might feel proud; but, for my own part, I found a little of them go a remarkably long way. Joining hands in a circle, and performing a series of maniacal jumps, to the time of a drum and a pair of cymbals in the centre (played by a deaf professor, who has registered a vow to hear the sound of his own instruments once, before he dies), is good fun, I grant you,—more especially when you happen to be forty in number, and have been dining together in a country where strong beer is about twopence a gallon. And then—if you all happen to possess tolerably strong lungs, and know the words of a patriotic chorus in the Flemish tongue, with a tune apiece to roar it to—why, the excitement of the thing is naturally enhanced. Towards the end of an entertainment organised on these principles—when every force is brought to unite in a general crescendo movement—when the time goes quicker, the drummer thumps harder; the legs leap higher; the voices roar louder, till organisation collapses, and the whole resolves itself into a pandemoniac chaos of shrieks, yells, bangs, thumps and tumbles. I know of no national amusement more thrillingly delightful in its way. Only it is rather trying to a nervous literary gentleman sitting at an opposite window, and who would like to finish an article in time for the post. Beyond this, I have no fault to find with it whatever.

They have gone, roaring and staggering, arm-in-arm, down the clean Flemish street, which tries so hard to look as if it belonged to the town; but which breaks down utterly into calm, dark-green, poplar-planted, sandy-ribbed, Dutch country, not two hundred yards from my window. Their stentorian, Poly-tuned chorus is still audible, and will be, long after I shall have lost sight of their flat caps and gloomy funeral blouses. Nay, after the very newspaper crown, with which they have invested their deaf drummer, and even the top of their drunken, lurching, stumbling, tricolor standard, shall have faded from my horizon. Bless them, for honest, manly, noisy, disreputable, boozy, Teuton giants, as they are!

I had, perhaps, better make good use of my time; for, in five minutes, the territory vacated by the True Friends of the Belgian Lion (who have simply changed their tavern in search of fresh taps and barmaids new) will, in all probability, be occupied by the Society of William Tells, or by the Worshipful Company of Football, or by the Metropolitan or the Provincial Band of Bool-Bog Players (I don't know what sort of a thing the Bool-Bog is; but there are several amateur societies in my vicinity whose express business is to play with it); or by the Voluntary Company of Arquebusiers, or by the great Arblast men, or by the little Arblast men, or by the United Belgian Skittlers. All these societies exist in and about the territory of Saint Josse-ten Noode, with whom it is a day of high festival (as it somehow generally manages to be about twice a week); and I know the Saint and his ways.

I am indebted for the honour of so distinguished an acquaintance, to the kindness of Monsieur Blanc, the gentleman-like landlord of the Sans Nom Hôtel, which, as all travellers know, is situated on the right-hand side of the Rue des Nuées, as you go up towards the Place de Rien, in the city of Brussels. I will tell you Monsieur Blanc's graceful manner of introducing me.

I arrived in Brussels late on Sunday night, fatigued with the charge of a wife, two children, about ten times the number of boxes I had ever dreamed of possessing—but all of which I was assured were my legitimate property—and the much more responsible encumbrance of a genteel French bonne. We had come with the intention of spending the autumn and winter—and no money worth speaking of—in the Belgian capital, to which this was my first visit. We had been recommended by a civil French bagman to the Sans Nom, as an agreeable house of refuge, where we might board economically. I will dismiss the French bagman (who was a very nice fellow, indeed), with the charitable hope that his memory had failed him as to the name of the hotel which he was desirous of recommending, and that he was not personally connected, by commission or otherwise, with the Sans Nom establishment.

I confess some slight misgiving seized me when the railway-omnibus put us down on the marble steps of a palace. There were more waiters than I cared about, assembled to welcome us in the hall, and a great deal too much chambermaid. The English language moreover—always an expensive extra on the continent—abounded ominously on the premises. Still I was very tired; and, having two days of exigent hard work before me, was desirous of shutting my eyes to unpleasant possibilities. We were shown into a suite of rooms such as I had only seen in the illustrated papers on royal progress occasions. On my demurring at the unnecessary splendour, I was informed that several families would be leaving in the morning, and I might have my choice of less sumptuous apartments. I supped, gorgeously, upon one-halfpenny-worth of chop to an intolerable quantity of silver and fine linen, and slept upon eider-down under crimson damask.

I have my own reasons for not being able to sleep comfortably or long upon eider-down under crimson damask, when those luxuries belong to an hotel whereof I have not been favoured with a sight of the tariff. I was up very early — some hours before the irresponsible members of my wearied family. I entered a dazzling coffee-room, and ordered breakfast—tea—for one, in good traveller's French. A courteous waiter enquired, in perfect English, if I would like anything with it: eggs, ham, or a chop, for instance?

I was highly offended, of course, and asked the waiter, rather warmly, if he were an Englishman.

No. He was a Swiss, of German extraction, but had spent a great portion of his life in one of the Italian Cantons. He had been "forward" in an English house in Paris.

So! I should evidently have to pay my share towards the expenses of this polyglot gentleman's education in at least four European languages. With a sensible diminution of appetite (which had been rather qualmish to begin with), I told him to bring in what he liked; eggs, ham, kidneys,—anything. I was evidently in for a breakfast. I might as well have a good one, and try to eat it.

"Beg pardon, sir. Did you say eggs, ham, and kidneys?"

I noticed that the over-educated waiter opened his eyes as he spoke.

"I said—anything you like. What does it matter?"

"Nothing to me, sir. Only we charge for everything separately. We generally mention that, sir; especially to gentlemen coming from England or France, where you pay the same whatever you have."

Really a very well-spoken and fair-dealing waiter! The arrangement sounded economical.

"Eggs, by all means."

"Two eggs, sir?"

"Two eggs, certainly—à la coque."

"Yes, sir."

Come! if they are in the habit of stickling about an egg, they cannot be accustomed to do things on a ruinous scale. After all, why did I come here? Was it not on account of the notoriously cheap splendours of the Belgian capital? Had I not been told I could live here in a palace for the price of a London second-floor, or a Parisian troisième? Was not this the land of cheap government, and, consequently, of cheap existence?

My two eggs à la coque were unexceptionable. I ate them with somebody else's appetite. It was certainly too good to be my own. I could have eaten two more; but I was not yet quite easy in my

mind. I would take a walk, and look at the town.

My misgivings returned. The quarter in which fate had pitched my threadbare tent, looked uncomfortably like the bottom of Waterloo Place. The houses were very white, very square, very marbly—and were great in the matter of portes cochères, with such brass handles and knockers as no hand out of a Berlin glove would dare to meddle with. Had I not made a mistake? Was it for the likes of me to dwell among these Carltons and Athenæums? Pshaw! My giants are only windmills after all! What I have taken for a Bank of England is but a bookseller's shop: negociants in the lace trade, with teachers of dancing and languages occupying the upper stories. Even that stupendous Buckingham Palace opposite, is only a Family Hotel. And, as I live! there is a tap on the basement story. Yea—a very tap-room. I see that they wish me to accept it as an estaminet; but I am not to be deceived. It is a place where—for all their Scagliola columns, and pale mahogany furniture—somebody is licensed to sell beer by retail; and the beer is to be drunk on the premises. I observed that the beer is going off at a very brisk rate, and that the persons who drink it on the premises are, for the most part, sweeps and coal-heavers. (Very tall, thin sweeps they are; generally knock-kneed, and with tightly-fitting skeleton suits of flannel — having leathern straps round their knees, to keep down exuberance of leg: the class of sweep which—if I were so fortunate as to own steamboats—I would employ to keep my funnels in order.) My old faith in Brussels as the centre and ideal of the cheap which is not the nasty, returns comfortingly to me. It is time the problem were tested, so I enter—do not be prematurely severe, reader—the bookseller's, and demand a daily journal.

The price? One penny sterling for a single copy; but if I will subscribe for three months, the journal will be delivered at my residence at the rate of a farthing and a fraction per diem. I will think over the subscription proposition; and, in the mean time, submit to the ruinous interest (or discount, which is it?) for temporary accommodation. Decidedly Brussels is cheap and splendid. The shop in which I had been thanked so civilly for my penny purchase of the latest intelligence would put Messrs. Sams and Moodie to shame.

Everything else that I buy is so cheap, and everything I see is so grand, I return to my marble palace strongly inclined to undertake the Dogeship of Venice, if need be. Monsieur Blanc, the civil intendant of my palace, approaches me and hopes that I have slept well. I inform him, with much bonhommie that I have slept admirably. Monsieur Blanc hopes I like their little town. As I am determined to put this good fellow at his ease, I tell him that I like his little town above all towns, and intend staying in it for some time. Monsieur Blanc and his fellow-citizens were only too much honoured. Had I secured a residence for myself and charming family, who were not up yet, naturally, owing to the fatigues of the voyage?

I thought it commonly decent to appear absorbed in the Echo de Bruxelles, that I might not observe Monsieur Blanc's natural confusion while I conveyed to him the overwhelming tidings that I intended staying where I was—namely, at Monsieur Blanc's hotel.

"Vrai—ment?"

Why did M. Blanc elevate his eyebrows and look at my boots? And how came it that I watched him narrowly as he did so—instead of minding my Echo de Bruxelles?

Yes. I had been recommended to the Sans Nom as an agreeable and economical residence. I did not wish to encumber myself with the responsibilities of an establishment in Brussels. It was one of the advantages of a popular form of government, that not merely the conveniences, but the elegances of life were——

"Hi! Blanc!"

"Monsieur."

In the Monsieur who had entered, and to enquire into whose will and pleasure M. Blanc deserted me—with what I did not then like to consider (but which was) very rude abruptness—I immediately recognised a well-known travelling English baronet, whom I knew to be in the annual enjoyment of more thousands sterling than I could even hope to earn in forty years.

"Do you mean to say you charge four francs and a half for a cup of tea?"

"Monsieur had eggs."

What was this chill that came over me so suddenly? I too had had eggs.

"When I came through here in January you only charged me two francs for chops and the (something) knows what all."

"Monsieur," replied M. Blanc, with an adamantine dignity that might not easily be wounded, "January is one month—September another. Our season of voyageurs barely extends over four months in the year. We must profit by those months. In the winter I make reductions. It is then my interest to lower my charges and even take in boarders by the week or month. But at present——"

I guessed what M. Blanc did at present. How the honourable and wealthy baronet took his arguments I never cared to enquire. It seemed to me that I gave a hop, step, and jump, beginning from the steps of M. Blanc's hotel, and alighting at a considerable distance outside the barriers of Brussels.

Whether it was that the garçon had changed my humble Balmorals for a pair of patent seven leagues in the morning; or whether Brussels was really no larger than

Finsbury-square; or whether my impatience to get as far as possible from the costly vicinity of the Sans Nom Hôtel, and secure lodgings before a reign of terror should set in, in the shape of dinner at that establishment, had made me insensible to ordinary considerations of time and space, I did not give myself time to enquire; at any rate—from what I had been told was a central position in the capital of Belgium—I found myself, as it seemed, in the fields within a few seconds. There was a bill in a window, which appeared to mean something to let, furnished. I remember ringing a bell, and galloping through five or six rooms; I also know that I threw down recklessly what was afterwards honourably acknowledged as six weeks' rent in advance. I tore back to the Sans Nom Hôtel—alas! only in time to find my family eating broiled fowl and sausages; bundled them all (including the bonne and boxes) into a confusion of cats and trucks; paid M. Blanc a small fortune for our one Belgian Night's Entertainment; took my new lodgings by storm (having remembered their whereabouts by a miracle); and sat down to write, on the top of a trunk, an application for British money. It was all the manuscript I posted on that day. Our family dinner consisted of cold ham (in a newspaper) and a cucumber salad.

It was thus then that I became acquainted with St. Josse-ten Noode, who presides over a commune lying outside Brussels, by the eastern gate leading to the good Catholic town of Louvain. I can never thank Monsieur Blanc sufficiently for his introduction.

St. Josse is, to Brussels, what Job Smith, the well-to-do, but avowedly plebeian greengrocer of Tottenham Court Road, is to his parvenu brother, the stockbroker—calling himself Altamont Fitzsmythe; and who sports a villa, a crest, a Norman descent, a genteel wife in a brougham, and other luxuries, in the vicinity of St. John's Wood; but whom we know to be Timothy Smith, of Tottenham Courtly origin, for all that.

I have obtained the confidence of Saint Josse. He has admitted me to all his family secrets. And this is what he is constantly telling me about his stuck-up relative:

"Don't you believe him, sir. He pretends to call himself Bruxelles. His name is Brussels; that's what his name is. He pretends to talk French, and goes in for French manners. He's a Dutchman, sir,—that's what he is. Look at me, sir, his own brother, and form your opinion as to our common origin. He may call his streets rues; he may flatter himself he has got an Hôtel de Ville, which is, of course, nothing but a Stadt-huys; he may go through the ridiculous farce of showing himself at a table d'hôte at five o'clock, as if I didn't know he had dined with his family at half-past twelve off sixteen dishes of roast and boiled; and with regard to beer and red cabbage——. Well, never mind! he may twist up his moustaches and screw himself in as much as he pleases. But it won't do. He is a bull, sir, of the true Flemish breed, and he shall not pass himself off for a frog, while I, his twin brother, of family likeness undeniable, am here at his elbow to roar the lie in his ears."

And to do St. Josse justice, he does roar it pretty loudly; especially towards evening; which is rapidly setting in at this present writing.

To begin with the good Saint's personal appearance. He is of the middle height, and massive; inclining rather to the Egyptian order of building, which widens towards the base, and which is supposed to be the form best adapted for resisting the greatest imaginable quantity of wet. Hair, flaxen, or rather, hempen, and cut short over the forehead; for St. Josse is not great in forehead, and it is well to make the most of his possessions in that commodity. What he does possess must, I am afraid, be pronounced beetling. It is very prominent over the eyes, and recedes at a violent angle to a very small elevation indeed. St. Josse has a good deal of nose; which might be Roman but for a peculiarity about the bridge, which is, as it were, an ancient Westminster Bridge that the Spirit of Modern Improvement has attempted to flatten into a Waterloo Bridge. Eyes, small, grey, and far apart, but of remarkable wide-awakefulness. What St. Josse wants in forehead he does not make up in chin. The latter feature recedes unpleasantly, giving the physiognomy a fish-like and uncanny aspect. But then he has mouth enough for half-a-dozen. A vast, thick-lipped mouth, that never moves except for purposes of refreshment or conversation; for St. Josse does all his laughing with the small muscles about his eyes. Altogether, the pervading expression is what would be called pawkie in Scotland; what would be declared indicative of smartness in the Northern States of the American Union; and what they would characterise in France by the convertible epithets of Normand and rusé. I think if St. Josse were to show himself in the north midland counties of England, he would be pronounced foxy. Indeed, his face is so familiar to me that it strikes me we must have met before, somewhere in the West Riding. St. Josse is remarkably like Yorkshire, to be sure.

St. Josse's every-day costume is simple and cleanly; not in the slightest degree picturesque. He wears a blue blouse, much darker than his French neighbours' (the Belgii were a more sombre people than the Gauls; and, no doubt, their shirts and braccæ were of a deeper cerulean from the remotest history), which looks like a pinafore in mourning. St. Josse likes a black cloth cap better than the universally execrated and still adopted chimney-pot of modern Europe; and therein he is wise. He must have a

good deal of trowser: he doesn't care about length, so as you give it him in width; and this garment he prefers built of the unmixed fustian order. He is very strong in the matter of shoes; lace-up well-polished calf-skin being your only wear, in the Saint's estimation. I wondered and admired at the dazzling perfection of St. Josse's chaussure, on the first day of our acquaintance. I have since discovered that he is not above wearing sabots when the weather is bad, or there is out-door work to be done. He is a thrifty Saint.

I wish St. Josse would make up his mind about his beard. At present he fluctuates between a close shave, and what one might really be excused for speaking of as going the whole hog; for, if ever a human countenance grew bristles, that of St. Josse may be said to do so. There never was such a beard as his, when he lets it grow to its full extent. The moustaches fall over his gigantic mouth like heavy curtains over a palace window; and the basement story, or chin-beard, seems to begin somewhere below the chest; descending to the loins. It is so unwieldly as to put you in mind of the Cape sheep, who require go-carts to carry their overgrown tails behind them. Yet I like St. Josse best in his full suit of beard; for it conceals his deficiency of chin. When this ornament has reached its full development, you have only to dress the Saint in his best (for St. Josse can throw off his doleful blouse on occasion, and has a well-stocked press of broadcloths); squat him down at a table before a quart cylinder of beer; unbutton his waistcoat, so as to let his coarse snowy shirt bag out a little; put a slouched feathered sombrero on his head; and straightway you have the very type of a goodly Rubens burgher. Change the sombrero for a tarpaulin sou'-wester; hang a rusty Andrea Ferrara at the good Saint's side, and you find yourself doubting that Master Hendrik Hudson could ever have left Netherlandios in search of Munhaltoe's territory: or, at any rate, believing that the enchantments of the Catskill Mountains must have preserved the great Dutch navigator alive and intact for the edification of the nineteenth century.

And now let us approach the delicate ground of St. Josse-ten Noode's morals. Well, they are unexceptionable, were it not for—ahem!—in fact, an exception. To come to the point at once—St. Josse drinks! He even drinks a great deal more than can possibly be good for him. He is a model husband and father; a just steward; an upright judge; a merchant owing no man anything. But, alack! he is a debauched saint. He begins early in the morning at his quart cylinders of beer. These last him but a very short time; and the spirits-and-water sets in hours before his early dinner. His afternoon is one unmitigated soak. He takes his liquor hot with sugar. He quarrels over it. He fights his adversary with his fists. He proposes healths, and starts choruses. He gets locked up. He will not go home till morning. He is drunk and disorderly.

The house opposite my window is ostensibly known as the Estaminet of Le Grand Cerf. St. Josse is not wholly free from the besetting weakness of his genteel brother. He would like you to think that he understands the French language. He will not mind the expense of a journeyman painter's wages for half a day to assist the delusion. But immediately under the Grand Cerf legend, St. Josse has taken very good care to have inscribed, in the mother tongue, "In den grooten hert." Otherwise, how could his thirsty liegemen know that he keeps a bier-huys at the sign of the Big Stag? But, thanks to the felicitous afterthought, they do know it. So do I, to my frequent inconvenience.

I should state that I have acquired the injurious habit of writing late into the night. I sometimes sit up, hard at work, till three, four, and even five in the morning. Well, I can assure the reader honestly that I have never yet seen the gaslights of the Big Stag put out, or noticed the slightest diminution of uproar in its eternal choruses. On the contrary, it has been towards the end of my longest vigils that I have observed the liveliest tendencies on the part of my opposite neighbours to begin spending the evening. My landlord—a most respectable citizen; in some way, I believe, connected with the secular service of the cathedral—is a frequenter of the Big Stag. I have never had the honour of hearing him come in for the night except once. It was, I should say, at about a quarter before five A.M. I had just closed my secretary, and was yawning over a useless bedroom candle, when I heard somebody tampering with the street-door. Having received the Times on the preceding day, and supped tolerably full of the burglarious horrors with which, in the absence of parliamentary intelligence, it has been found necessary to keep the minds of my compatriots in a proper state of excitement, I felt alarmed, and thought of the five-and-twenty francs in my secretary. I rushed down stairs, armed with the poker. I found the door wide open, and my landlord prostrate on the steps, smiling at his latch-key, which had fallen from his hand, and which he had evidently given up trying to reach. He was babbling—probably of green fields—in his native tongue. I hauled him in-doors, pulled off his boots, dropped him into an arm-chair, in the nearest parlour (rented, as I have since learnt, by a deacon of the Belgic church), and shut him in. He was perfectly well the next morning. He came up to my rooms at about a quarter past eight o'clock, a miracle of clean linen and the closest shaving, and asked for his rent in the best French imaginable. He tendered no thanks whatever

for my voluntary services as porter and boot-jack. I suppose it was a matter of course with him. Such is life in St. Josse-ten Noode!

Yet, with all this, St. Josse is remarkably pious; and is, I am told, a model of the strictest and most unquestioning Catholicism. He distracts my attention almost as much by his frequent religious processions as by his eternal roaring drunken kermesses. I confess I cannot understand St. Josse being a Roman Catholic. He looks so like the very type of hard-headed, objective, independent Scotch dissent. Yet here, for the first time in my limited travels, have I witnessed the phenomenon of a Catholic place of worship regularly attended by the male members of the community. The proportion of shovel-hats and black robes in the streets is greater than I have ever noticed in any other country. There must be an immense trade done here in shovel-hats, for they must wear out rapidly, having to be removed at every two or three yards, in courteous acknowledgment of the reverence paid to their wearer by all classes. Statues of the Virgin and various saints, in white-washed niches profusely decorated in the old florid school of Flemish ornament, are to be found at the corners of nearly every street. And these, I notice, are seldom passed with indifference.

Leaving the question of St. Josse's godliness an open one, there can be no mistake as to his faith in its accompanying minor virtue —cleanliness. If ever you come to live in St. Josse-ten Noode, take my advice, and stop in-doors carefully every Saturday afternoon. If you neglect this warning, you will simply have a bucket of water thrown over you before you have proceeded ten yards from your door-step. Scarcely will you have expressed your indignation at this outrage, and proceeded ten yards further, when you will have another bucket of water thrown over you; and so on at the same ratio, so long as you are so unwise as to keep the streets while St. Josse-ten Noode is undergoing his hebdomadal sluicing. I think the matrons and domestics of the district are rather fond of administering these amateur shower-baths to unwary passengers. At first, I was inclined to give them credit for mere indifference, on an understanding that it was the passenger's business to look out for himself, on the sauve qui peut principle. But I am now more than half convinced that there is malice prepense in the administration. I was struck, last Saturday week—when I had been incautiously entrapped into prolonging a walk beyond the hours of public safety—by the uncommon politeness of a young lady in sabots, who arrested the progress of a bucketful of water which she was about to hurl viciously at a shop window, as I thought, in order to enable me to pass in dry security. I was quite mistaken. She had only waited for me to come up with her, and that she might take her aim with greater precision. Having had some experience in this exciting national sport, I was so fortunate as to escape with a simple drenching of the left leg. A less wary subject would have received the entire consignment on his head and shoulders, and might have thought himself lucky to avoid being knocked down with the bucket itself.

From one o'clock till six in the afternoon it is one incessant clatter of sabots, pails, and brooms. I believe if the ladies of St. Josse-ten Noode had the time they would beeswax the pavement, sand-paper the fire-plugs, and blacklead the lamp-posts. Their own tables and dressers, I am convinced, they wash three or four times a day with Windsor soap and a nail-brush. What they want with so many plates and dishes I cannot imagine when they have floors so admirably adapted for eating a dinner off. Their grocers' shops make you wink as you enter them; such is their dazzling brilliancy in the matter of scale and coffee-mill. You never saw such transparent window panes and lamp glasses, such blinding caps, kerchiefs, tablecloths, and curtains, nor yet human flesh so rasped, scrubbed, and soaked into perennial cleanliness. I look upon a St. Josse-ten Noodienne with the same feeling of compassion as upon a searcher after the philosopher's stone or the perpetual motion. She must spend her entire life looking for a single speck of dirt which she is doomed never to discover.

I thought as much! The United Belgian Skittlers, I think, judging from their colours. Whoever they are, they have evidently come to stop; and, as there seems to be about fifty of them, including two clarionets and a trombone, I had better leave off.

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A PETITION TO THE NOVEL-WRITERS.

I HOPE nobody will be shocked, but it is only proper that I should confess, before writing another line, that I am about to disclose the existence of a Disreputable Society, in one of the most respectable counties in England. I dare not be more particular as to the locality, and I cannot possibly mention the members by name. However, I have no objection to admit that I am perpetual Secretary, that my wife is President, that my daughters are Council, and that my nieces form the Society. Our object is to waste our time, misemploy our intellects, and ruin our morals; or, in other words, to enjoy the prohibited luxury of novel-reading.

It is a private opinion of mine that the dull people in this country—no matter whether they belong to the Lords or the Commons—are the people who, privately as well as publicly, govern the nation. By dull people, I mean people of all degrees of rank and education, who never want to be amused. I don't know how long it is since these dreary members of the population first hit on the cunning idea—the only idea they ever had, or will have—of calling themselves Respectable; but I do know that, ever since that time, this great nation has been afraid of them—afraid in religious, in political, and in social matters. If my present business were with the general question, I think I could prove this assertion easily and indisputably by simple reference to those records of our national proceedings which appear in the daily newspapers. But my object in writing is of the particular kind. I have a special petition to address to the writers of novels on the part of the Disreputable Society to which I belong; and if I am to give any example here of the supremacy of the dull people, it must be drawn from one or two plain evidences of their success in opposing the claims of our fictitious literature to fit popular recognition.

The dull people decided years and years ago, as every one knows, that novel-writing was the lowest species of literary exertion, and that novel-reading was a dangerous luxury and an utter waste of time. They gave, and still give, reasons for this opinion, which are very satisfactory to persons born without Fancy or Imagination, and which are utterly inconclusive to everyone else. But, with reason or without it, the dull people have succeeded in affixing to our novels the stigma of being a species of contraband goods. Look, for example, at the Prospectus of any librarian. The principal part of his trade of book-lending consists in the distributing of novels; and he is uniformly unwilling to own that simple fact. Sometimes, he is afraid to print the word Novel at all in his lists, and smuggles in his contraband fiction under the head of Miscellaneous Literature. Sometimes, after freely offering all histories, all biographies all voyages, all travels, he owns self-reproachfully to the fact of having novels too, but deprecatingly adds—Only the best! As if no other branch of the great tree of literature ever produced tasteless and worthless fruit! In all cases, he puts novels last on his public list of the books he distributes, though they stand first on his private list of the books he gains by. Why is he guilty of all these sins against candour? Because he is afraid of the dull people.

Look again—and this brings me to the subject of these lines—at our Book Clubs. How paramount are the dull people there! How they hug to their rigid bosoms Voyages and Travels! How they turn their intolerant backs on novels! How resolutely they get together, in a packed body, on the committee, and impose their joyless laws on the yielding victims of the club, who secretly want to be amused! Our book club was an example of the unresisted despotism of their rule. We began with a law that novels should be occasionally admitted; and the dull people abrogated it before we had been in existence a twelvemonth. I smuggled in the last morsel of fiction that our starving stomachs were allowed to consume, and produced a hurricane of virtuous indignation at the next meeting of the committee. All the dull people of both sexes attended. One dull gentleman said the author was a pantheist, and quoted some florid ecstasies on the subject of scenery and flowers in support of the opinion. Nobody seemed to know exactly what a pantheist was, but everybody cried "Hear, hear,"—which did just as well for the purpose. Another dull gentleman said the

book was painful, because there was a deathbed scene in it. A third reviled it for morbid revelling in the subject of crime, because a shot from the pistol of a handsome highwayman dispatched the villain of the story. But the great effect of the day was produced by a lady, the mother of a large family which began with a daughter of eighteen years, and ended with a boy of eight months. This lady's objection affected the heroine of the novel,—a most respectable married woman, perpetually plunged in virtuous suffering, but an improper character for young persons to read about, because the poor thing had three accouchements in the course of three volumes. "How can I suffer my daughters to read such a book as that?" cried our prolific subscriber, indignantly. A tumult of applause followed. A chorus of speeches succeeded, full of fierce references to "our national morality," and "the purity of our hearths and homes." A resolution was passed excluding all novels for the future; and then, at last, the dull people held their tongues, and sat down with a thump in their chairs, and glared contentedly on each other in stolid controversial triumph. From that time forth (histories and biographies being comparatively scarce articles), we gaping subscribers were fed by the dull people on nothing but Voyages and Travels. Every man (or woman) who had voyaged and travelled to no purpose, who had made no striking observations of any kind, who had nothing whatever to say, and who said it at great length in large type on thick paper, with accompaniment of frowsy lithographic illustrations, was introduced weekly to our hearths and homes as the most valuable guide, philosopher, and friend whom our rulers could possibly send us. All the subscribers submitted; all partook the national dread of the dull people, with the exception of myself and the members of my family enumerated at the beginning of these pages. We gallantly and publicly abandoned the club; got a box-full of novels for ourselves, once a month, from London; lost caste with our respectable friends in consequence; and became, for the future, throughout the length and breadth of our neighbourhood, the Disreputable Society to which I have already alluded. If the dull people of our district were told to-morrow that my wife, daughters, and nieces had all eloped in different directions, leaving just one point of the compass open as a runaway outlet for me and the cook, I feel firmly persuaded that not one of them would be inclined to discredit the report. They would just look up from their Voyages and Travels, say to each other, "Exactly what might have been expected!" and go on with their reading again as if no such thing as an extraordinary domestic tragedy had occurred in the neighbourhood.

And now, to come to the main object of this paper,—the humble petition of myself and family to certain of our novel-writers. We may say of ourselves that we deserve to be heard, for we have braved public opinion for the sake of reading novels; and we have read, for some years past, all (I hold to the assertion, incredible as it may appear)—all the stories in one, two, and three volumes, that have issued from the press. It has been a hard struggle—but we are actually still abreast of the flood of fiction at this moment. The critics may say that one novel is worth reading, and that another is not. We are no critics, and we read everything. The enjoyment we have derived from our all-devouring propensities has been immense,—the gratitude we feel to the ladies and gentlemen who feed us to repletion, is inexpressible. What, then, have we got to petition about? A very slight matter. Marking, first of all, as exceptions, certain singular instances of originality, I may mention, as a rule, that our novel-reading enjoyments have hitherto been always derived from the same sort of characters and the same sort of stories, varied, indeed, as to names and minor events, but fundamentally always the same, through hundreds on hundreds of successive volumes, by hundreds on hundreds of different authors. We, none of us, complain of this, so far; for we like to have as much as possible of any good thing; but we beg deferentially to inquire whether it might not be practicable to give us a little variety for the future? We believe we have only to prefer our request to the literary ladies and gentlemen who are so good as to interest and amuse us, to have it granted immediately. They cannot be expected to know when the reader has had enough of one set of established characters and events, unless the said reader takes it on himself to tell them. Actuated by this conviction, I propose in the present petition to enumerate respectfully, on behalf of myself and family in our capacity of readers, some of the most remarkable among the many good things in fiction which we think we have had enough of. We have no unwholesome craving after absolute novelty—all that we venture to ask for is, the ringing of a slight change on some of the favourite old tunes which we have long since learnt by heart.

To begin with our favourite Hero. He is such an old friend that we have by this time got to love him dearly. We would not lose sight of him altogether on any consideration whatever. If we thought we had done with his aquiline nose, his tall form, his wavy hair, his rich voice, melancholy would fall on our fireside, and we should look at life for the future with jaundiced eyes. Far be it from us to hint at the withdrawal of this noble, loving, injured fascinating man! Long may we continue to weep on his deep chest and press respectfully to our lips the folds of his ample cloak! Personally speaking it is by no means of him that we are getting tired, but of certain actions which we think he has

performed often enough. For instance, may we put it respectfully to the ladies and gentlemen who are so good as to exhibit him, that he had better not "stride" any more? He has stridden so much, on so many different occasions, across so many halls, along so many avenues, in and out at so many drawing-room doors, that he must be knocked up by this time, and his dear legs ought really to have a little rest. Again, when his dignity is injured by irreverent looks or words, can he not be made to assert it for the future without "drawing himself up to his full height?" He has really been stretched too much by perpetual indulgence in this exercise for scores and scores of years. Let him sit down—do please let him sit down next time! It would be quite new, and so impressive. Then, again, we have so often discovered him standing with folded arms, so often beheld him pacing with folded arms, so often heard him soliloquise with folded arms, so often broken in upon him meditating with folded arms, that we think he had better do something else with his arms for the future. Could he swing them for a change? or put them akimbo? or drop them suddenly on either side of him? or could he give them a holiday altogether, and fold his legs for a change? Perhaps not. The word Legs—why, I cannot imagine—seems always suggestive of jocularity. "Fitzherbert stood up and folded his arms," is serious. "Fitzherbert sat down and folded his legs," is comic. Why, I should like to know.

A word—one respectful word of remonstrance to the lady-novelists especially. We think they have put our Hero on horseback often enough. For the first five hundred novels or so, it was grand, it was thrilling, when he threw himself into the saddle after the inevitable quarrel with his lady-love, and galloped off madly to his bachelor home. It was grand to read this—it was awful to know, as we came to know at last by long experience, that he was sure before he got home to be spilt—no, not spilt; that is another word suggestive of jocularity—thrown, and given up as dead. It was inexpressibly soothing to behold him in the milder passages of his career, moody in the saddle, with the reins thrown loosely over the arched neck of the steed, as the gallant animal paced softly with his noble burden, along a winding road, under a blue sky, on a balmy afternoon in early spring. All this was delightful reading for a certain number of years; but everything wears out at last, and trust me, ladies, your hero's favourite steed, your dear, intelligent, affectionate, glossy, long-tailed horse, has really done his work, and may now be turned loose, for some time to come, with great advantage to yourselves, and your readers.

Having spoken a word to the ladies, I am necessarily and tenderly reminded of their charming representatives—the Heroines. Let me say something, first, about our favourite two sisters—the tall dark one, who is serious and unfortunate: the short light one, who is coquettish and happy. Being an Englishman, I have, of course, an ardent attachment to anything like an established rule, simply because it is established. I know that it is a rule that, when two sisters are presented in a novel, one must be tall and dark, and the other short and light. I know that five-feet-eight of female flesh and blood, when accompanied by an olive complexion, black eyes, and raven hair, is synonymous with strong passions and an unfortunate destiny. I know that five feet nothing, golden ringlets, soft blue eyes, and a lily-brow, cannot possibly be associated by any well-constituted novelist, with anything but ringing laughter, arch innocence, and final matrimonial happiness. I have studied these great first principles of the art of fiction too long not to reverence them as established laws; but I venture respectfully to suggest that the time has arrived when it is no longer necessary to insist on them in novel after novel. I am afraid there is something naturally revolutionary in the heart of man. Although I know it to be wrong, to be against all precedent, I want to revolutionise our favourite two sisters. Would any bold innovator run all risks, and make them both alike in complexion and in stature? Or would any desperate man (I dare not suggest such a course to the ladies) effect an entire alteration, by making the two sisters change characters? I tremble when I see to what lengths the spirit of innovation is leading me. Would the public accept the tall dark-haired sister, if she exhibited a jolly disposition and a tendency to be flippant in her talk? Would readers be fatally startled out of their sense of propriety, if the short charmer with the golden hair, appeared before them as a serious, strong-minded, fierce-spoken, miserable, guilty woman? It might be a dangerous experiment to make this change; but it would be worth trying—the rather (if I may be allowed to mention anything so utterly irrelevant to the subject under discussion as real life) because I think there is some warrant in nature for attempting the proposed innovation. Judging by my own small experience, I should say that strong minds and passionate natures reside principally in the breasts of little, light women, especially if they have angelic blue eyes and a quantity of fair ringlets. The most facetiously skittish woman, for her age, with whom I am acquainted, is my own wife, who is three inches taller than I am. The heartiest laugher I ever heard is my second daughter, who is bigger even than my wife, and has the blackest eyebrows and the swarthiest cheeks in the whole neighbourhood. With such instances as these, producible from the bosom of my own family, who can wonder if I want, for once in a way, to overthrow the

established order of things, and have a jovial dark sister and a dismal light one introduced as startling novelties in one or two of the hundred new volumes which we are likely to receive next season from the Circulating Library?

But, after all, our long-established two sisters seem to be exceptional beings, and to possess comparatively small importance, the moment our minds revert to that vastly superior single personage, THE HEROINE. Let me mention, to begin with, that we wish no change to be made in our respectable, recognised, old-fashioned Heroine, who has lived and loved and wept for centuries. I have taken her to my bosom thousands of times already, and ask nothing better than to indulge in that tender luxury thousands of times again. I love her blushing cheek, her gracefully-rounded form, her chiselled nose, her slender waist, her luxuriant tresses which always escape from the fillet that binds them. Any man or woman who attempts, from a diseased craving after novelty, to cheat me out of one of her moonlight walks, one of her floods of tears, one of her kneeling entreaties to obdurate relatives, one of her rapturous sinkings on her lover's bosom, is a novelist whom I distrust and dislike. He, or she, may be a very remarkable writer; but their books will not do for my family and myself. The Heroine, the whole Heroine, and nothing but the Heroine—that is our cry, if you drive us into a corner and insist on our stating precisely what we want, in the plainest terms possible.

Being, thus, conservatives in regard to the established Heroine, though tainted with radicalism in reference to the established Hero, it will not, I trust, appear a very unaccountable proceeding, if we now protest positively, and even indignantly, against a new kind of heroine—a bouncing, ill-conditioned, impudent young woman, who has been introduced among us of late years. I venture to call this wretched and futile substitute for our dear, tender, gentle, loving old Heroine, the Man-Hater; because, in every book in which she appears, it is her mission from first to last to behave as badly as possible to every man with whom she comes in contact. She enters on the scene with a preconceived prejudice against my sex, for which I, as a man, abominate her; for which my wife, my daughters, my nieces, and all other available women whom I have consulted on the subject, despise her. When her lover makes her an offer of marriage, she receives it in the light of a personal insult, goes up to her room immediately afterwards, and flies into a passion with herself, because she is really in love with the man all the time—comes down again, and snubs him before company instead of making a decent apology—pouts and flouts at him, on all after-occasions, until the end of the book is at hand—then, suddenly, turns round and marries him! If we feel inclined to ask why she could not, under the circumstances, receive his advances with decent civility at first, we are informed that her "maidenly consciousness" prevented it. This maidenly consciousness seems to me very like new English for our old-fashioned phrase bad manners. And I am the more confirmed in this idea, because, on all minor occasions, the Man-Hater is persistently rude and disobliging to the last. Every individual in the novel who wears trousers and gets within range of her maidenly consciousness, becomes her natural enemy from that moment. If he makes a remark on the weather, her lip curls; if he asks leave to give her a potato at dinner-time (meaning, poor soul, to pick out for her the mealiest in the dish), her neck curves in scorn; if he offers a compliment, finding she won't have a potato, her nostril dilates. Whatever she does, even in her least aggressive moments, she always gets the better of all the men. They are set up like nine-pins for the Man-Hater to knock down. They are described, on their introduction, as clever, resolute fellows; but they lose their wits and their self-possession the instant they come within hail of the Man-Hater's terrible tongue. No man kisses her, no man dries her tears, no man sees her blush (except with rage), all through the three volumes. And this is the opposition Heroine who is set up as successor to our soft, feminine, loveable, sensitive darling of former days!

Set up, too, by lady-novelists, who ought surely to be authorities when female characters are concerned. Is the Man-Hater a true representative of young women, now-a-days? If so, what is to become of my son—my unlucky son, aged twelve years. In a short time, he will be marriageable, and he will go into the world to bill and coo, and offer his hand and heart, as his father did before him. My unhappy offspring, what a prospect awaits you! One forbidding phalanx of Man-Haters, bristling with woman's dignity, and armed to the teeth with maidenly consciousness, occupies the wide matrimonial field, look where you will! Ill-fated youth, yet a few years, and the female neck will curve, the female nostril dilate, at the sight of you. You see that stately form, those rustling skirts, that ample brow, and fall on your knees before it, and cry "Marry me, marry me, for Heaven's sake!" My deluded boy, that is not a woman—it is a Man-Hater—a whited sepulchre full of violent expostulations and injurious epithets. She will lead you the life of a costermonger's ass, until she has exhausted her whole stock of maidenly consciousness; and she will then say (in effect, if not in words):—"Inferior animal, I loved you from the first—I have asserted my womanly dignity by making an abject fool of you in public and private—now you may marry me!" Marry her not, my son! Go rather to the slave-market at Constantinople—buy a Circassian wife, who has

heard nothing and read nothing about man-haters, bring her home (with no better dowry than pots of the famous Cream from her native land to propitiate your mother and sisters), and trust to your father to welcome an Asiatic daughter-in-law, who will not despise him for the unavoidable misfortune of being—a Man!

But I am losing my temper over a hypothetical case. I am forgetting the special purpose of my petition, which is to beg that the Man-Hater may be removed altogether from her usurped position of heroine. I have respectfully suggested slight changes in other characters—I imperatively demand total extinction in the present instance. The new-fashioned heroine is a libel on her sex. As a husband and a father, I solemnly deny that she is in any single respect a natural woman. Am I no judge? I have a wife, and I made her an offer. Did she receive it as the Man-Haters receive offers? Can I ever forget the mixture of modest confusion and perfect politeness with which that admirable woman heard me utter the most absolute nonsense that ever issued from my lips? Perhaps she is not fit for a heroine. Well, I can give her up in that capacity without a pang. But my daughters and nieces have claims, I suppose, to be considered as examples of what young ladies are in the present day. Ever since I read the first novel with a Man-Hater in it, I have had my eye on their nostrils, and I can make affidavit that I have never yet seen them dilate under any circumstances, or in any society. As for curling their lips and curving their necks, they have attempted both operations at my express request, and have found them to be physical impossibilities. In men's society, their manners (like those of all other girls whom I meet with) are natural and modest; and—in the cases of certain privileged men—winning, into the bargain. They open their eyes with astonishment when they read of the proceedings of our new-fashioned heroines, and throw the book indignantly across the room, when they find a nice man submitting to be bullied by a nasty woman, because he has paid her the compliment of falling in love with her. No, no! we positively decline to receive any more Man-Haters, and there is an end of it!

With this uncompromising expression of opinion, I think it desirable to bring the present petition to a close. There are one or two other good things in fiction, of which we have had enough; but I refrain from mentioning them, from modest apprehension of asking for too much at a time. If the slight changes in general, and the sweeping reform in particular, which I have ventured to suggest, can be accomplished, we are sure, in the future as in the past, to be grateful, appreciating, and incessant novel-readers. If we cannot claim any critical weight in the eyes of our esteemed authors, we can at least arrogate to ourselves the minor merit, not only of reading novels perpetually but (and this is a rarer virtue) of publicly and proudly avowing the fact. We only pretend to be human beings with a natural desire for as much amusement as our work-a-day destinies will let us have. We are just respectable enough to be convinced of the usefulness of occasionally reading for information; but we are also certain (and we say it boldly, in the teeth of the dull people), that there are few higher, better, or more profitable enjoyments in this world than reading a good novel.

THE FRENCHMAN OF TWO WIVES.

Monsieur de la Pivardière was a gentleman of ancient family, but reduced fortune, in Touraine. The family name was Bouchet, but he called himself Pivardière to distinguish himself from his brothers; he was of moderate height, neither handsome nor ugly, rather intelligent, well-disposed, and fond of amusement; he married more for money than for love a woman somewhat older than himself—a Madame du Plessir—a widow, who brought him an estate and château, called Nerbonne, for a dowry. She was not more than thirty-five, very fond of society, of which she was esteemed an ornament; for, says the chronicle, "Elle recevait avec une grace parfaite." She and her husband lived on good terms, but he was frequently absent from home; for, he was lieutenant in the regiment of the Dragoons of St. Herinine, and had to be with the army; nevertheless, he corresponded with his wife, and came to see her whenever he could obtain leave of absence. At last he grew jealous of her. There was a certain Prior de Miseray, who, in former days, had been a great friend of his own, whom he had made his own chaplain, which obliged the priest to come to the château more frequently than when he had been only the Prior of Miseray. At first the husband liked this increase of intimacy, but when he found that the prior continued to come to the château in his absence as frequently as before, if not more frequently, he took umbrage, and chose to suppose that his wife and his friend betrayed him. He was terribly afraid of the ridicule that attaches to a deceived husband, and he said nothing, but took his own resolution. He quitted the army without telling his wife, and set out to travel. Whither he went is not particularly recorded—probably not very far—for, a short time after he had left the service he arrived, on a summer's evening, at the gates of the town of Auxerre. A number of young girls were walking on the ramparts, laughing and talking among themselves. One of them attracted his admiration; she was very handsome; he made inquiries about her, and discovered that she was a Demoiselle Pillard, the daughter of a widow who kept a small inn—her father was

recently dead. He had been a door-keeper of the court of justice, and this office would descend, as a dowry, upon whomsoever should marry his daughter. Employments were, in those days, like estates, with the permission to bequeath them. At first he only intended to make the young woman his mistress; it was all a person in her position could expect from a fine gentleman; but, as it happened that she was too virtuous to agree to anything but honourable, lawful marriage, and as the Sieur de la Pivardière was very much in love, and considered that he had been irrevocably injured by and divided from his wife, he felt no scruple in contracting a second marriage while she was alive; although bigamy, by the laws of France, was, in those days, a hanging matter.

He married her, notwithstanding, under his family name of Bouchet, and ceasing to be a seigneur, entered upon the office of huissier, which his bride's father had held before him: thus becoming a simple bourgeois. This marriage was very happy, and he did not suffer any remorse or misgivings to disturb his felicity. At the end of a year his second wife presented him with a baby, and he began to wish to make some better provision for it than the chance of becoming a huissier like its father and grandfather. He obtained leave of absence from his duties, and made a journey to Nerbonne, where his first wife still continued to reside, and the prior to visit her. M. de la Pivardière saw no reason for altering his previous opinion as to his having just grounds of jealousy, although it is only fair to say, that no proof beyond his own suspicions ever came to light. He pretended to his wife that he was still attached to the army, and needed money to buy his promotion. She gave him all she had, and he departed to rejoin his second wife, on whom he bestowed all the money he obtained from his first. Every year, for four successive years, he made a visit to Nerbonne, and took from his wife nearly the whole of her income, always under the pretence of the exigences of the service. His family at Auxerre, in the meanwhile, had increased; he had by that time four children.

At length his real wife, Madame de la Pivardière, began to entertain some vague suspicions that all was not right. News did not travel in those days either far or fast. Still, it is very possible that rumours of his life at Auxerre might have reached her.

In the month of June, sixteen hundred and ninety-seven, she received a letter from the procureur of the parliament in Paris, inquiring if she could tell him where her husband then was, as a person had written to him from Auxerre, to say that a woman there was extremely anxious to know his address, that she might send some clothes to him. This procureur—M. de Vigneur—appears to have been a friend, if not a relative of Madame de la Pivardière. Such a letter was well calculated to inspire any wife with jealousy—much more Madame de la Pivardière, who had so much reason to question her husband's proceedings. She was still in all the perplexity caused by this letter when her husband himself arrived at Bourg Dieu (a small village about seven miles from his château); he was met by a mason named François Marsau, who knew him, and who expressed his surprise that he should come there instead of going home; but M. de la Pivardière, who was in a very bad humour, and more jealous of his wife than ever, declared his intention not to go to the château until the evening, when he hoped to surprise the Prior of Miseray with his wife, when either he would take the prior's life, or the prior should take his. François Marsau, thinking to do a good deed, carried this information to Madame de la Pivardière and to the prior. Two hours afterwards, when her husband alighted at the gate of the château, he certainly found both his wife and the prior—but he also found several of the neighbouring gentry with their wives. They were all seated at dinner, and it was a friendly party instead of a guilty tête-à-tête that he disturbed. The prior seemed overjoyed to see him, and all the guests gave him a cordial welcome; his wife alone kept her seat, and did not speak to him. A lady of the company said, jestingly, to Pivardière,

"Is that the way to welcome back a husband after so long an absence?"

He replied gloomily,—

"I am her husband, it is true, but I am not her friend!"

And then he seated himself at the table in silence.

This was not likely to make the rest of the party very comfortable, and they took their departure as soon as possible. Left alone with his wife, M. de la Pivardière asked the meaning of the insolent reception she had given him.

"Go ask your wife," she replied.

Of course her husband stoutly denied everything; but, he could not convince her. They had high words together, and at length she was overheard to say,

"You shall learn what it is to offer such an insult to a woman like me!"

After which she left him, and retired to her own room, the door of which she shut with violence. M. de la Pivardière also retired into the room that had been prepared for him.

From that moment he disappeared. To comprehend properly the remainder of this strange story, the reader must bear in mind that, in those days, the domestic life in the interior of the castles and châteaux was of the strictest seclusion and privacy. There were no neighbours except those of the village belonging to the lord of the place, and they seldom dreamed of either commenting upon his acts or questioning

the divine right of the seigneur to do as he pleased. The domestics were generally hereditary servants, whose entire and perfect fidelity to the family was the virtue of their class. Any crime could be perpetrated in these country residences with the profoundest secrecy, and it was quite possible to stifle all evidence of actions that, if once known, would seem of too monstrous growth for society to contain, much less to conceal. Added to this, high roads were few and bad in those parts of the country, remote from Paris, or at a distance from large towns; and small towns and villages within a few miles of each other were as much isolated as if they had stood in different countries. The system of the administration of justice was complicated, and very different from the present system of centralisation. Every town had its lieutenant-particulier, its procureur, its judge, and all the machinery of a separate administration of justice, except in cases of appeal to a higher court. No district could meddle with the affairs of another, and consequently there was no unity of action. The course of justice was complicated to a degree difficult to conceive in these days. Years were consumed, and the accused were either left to languish in a dungeon—a heavy punishment for a convicted malefactor—or the trials were concluded with a fatal precipitancy.

As we have said, the Sieur de la Pivardière was never seen by any of the inmates of the château, after they had retired for the night on the fifteenth of August, sixteen hundred and ninety-seven, leaving him alone with his wife in the dining-room after the guests had departed.

His horse, his arms, his riding-boots, and his heavy travelling cloak, were all left at the château, but the master of them was no where to be seen. This mysterious disappearance began to be whispered abroad, and a vague, sinister report that he had been murdered began to circulate. Four persons belonging to the château declared they heard the report of a musket on the night of the fifteenth of August. The two female servants of Madame de la Pivardière said things that seemed to confirm the report beginning to gain ground, and people murmured that the magistrates of the district took no steps to inquire into the matter.

At last the report of the Sieur de la Pivardière's disappearance under suspicious circumstances reached Chatillon Sur l'Indre, and M. Morin, the procureur of that district, made a formal demand of the higher authorities to be allowed to inquire into the truth of the reports, and to make a public memorial of the result. This was on the fifth of September, and the next morning M. Morin and M. Bonnet, the lieutenant-particulier of Chatillon, repaired to the village of Jeu, in which parish Nerbonne was situated. They examined fifteen witnesses, who, however, could only depose to what they had heard from the two female domestics of Madame de la Pivardière. In consequence an order was issued for the arrest of Madame de la Pivardière, her children and servants. Catherine Lemoins, one of the two female servants, was arrested and thrown into prison; Catherine Lemercier, the other servant, made her escape. Madame de la Pivardière, who loudly asserted her innocence, concealed herself in the house of a friend. Madame d'Aunine, another friend, took charge of her jewels and plate, whilst some of the neighbouring peasantry received her furniture, leaving the château to the mercy of the emissaries of the law. Madame de la Pivardière's little daughter—ten years old—was taken to the house of Madame de Préville, a friend of the family. After she had been there a few days, she related a story which caused an immense sensation, and seemed quite conclusive as to the fate of her father and the guilt of her mother.

She said, that on the fifteenth of last August, she had not been put to bed in her usual bed-room, but in a garret at the top of the house, and that after she was in bed her mother came and locked the door upon her. During the night she was awakened by a great noise and a lamentable voice crying out, "O my God, have mercy upon me!" She tried to get out, but could not, because the door was fast locked. The next day, she saw marks of blood on the floor of the room where her father had slept, and, some days afterwards she saw her mother washing linen stained with blood at a brook. Nobody dreamed of misdoubting the truth of a story told with so much simplicity. Other witnesses arose, all deposing to some new and corroborative fact.

Catherine Lemercier, the servant who had escaped, was arrested early in October, and being interrogated made a full confession. She said that, on the evening of the fifteenth of August Madame de la Pivardière sent everybody out of the way, even her little daughter, whom she sent to sleep in the garret, locking her in. There remained in the house only Madame de la Pivardière, herself and Catherine Lemoins, the other servant; but the Prior of Miseray was in the court-yard along with two of his valets, one of whom was armed with a sabre, the other with a pistol. Apparently, Madame de la Pivardière had not full confidence in Catherine Lemoins, for she sent her out to get some eggs from a farm-house at a short distance. She then went out to the prior and his servants, and brought them into the house. A candle having been lighted, they all proceeded to the room where M. de la Pivardière was sleeping. One of the men drew aside the curtains of the bed and, seeing that their victim was lying in a position which rendered it difficult to strike him, the man mounted on a stool and fired down upon him. The unfortunate gentleman was only wounded, and, starting up streaming with blood,

begged his life in the most moving tones, addressing himself especially to his wife without being able to touch her compassion. The other servant of the prior fell upon him with his sword and wounded him in several places. She, the witness, struck with horror at the spectacle and at the terrible cries of her master, could not refrain from tears, but was threatened by her mistress with the same fate if she showed any compassion. She also deposed that, as soon as her master was dead, the prior's servants took away the body, and she did not know what they did with it; but whilst they were gone Madame de la Pivardière fetched some ashes and herself scoured the boards. She had the bed carried into the cellar, along with the bed-clothes, which were steeped in blood. The straw was taken out of the mattrass and burned, and the ticking filled with some fresh half-beaten straw. The prior's servants returned in about two hours, and they all sat down to supper together. At first, this witness said that the prior himself was not actually present during the assassination. But, shortly afterwards falling dangerously ill, and being apparently at the point of death, she sent for the judges and declared to them that she had disguised the truth as regarded the Prior of Miseray, and that he was the man who actually struck the fatal blow. Catherine Lemoins, the other servant, confirmed the evidence, and added that on her return from fetching the eggs, she went straight to the room occupied by the Sieur de la Pivardière and found him just dead; that she desired the two valets to take away the body and bury it, but did not tell them where; and that then she went and prepared supper. After supper the men departed.

More than thirty witnesses, most of them friends of Madame de la Pivardière, deposed to the fact of the assassination, and confirmed the evidence of the two servants in many ways. All doubt about this tragedy was at an end—at least in Châtillon sur l'Indre, where the inquiry had taken place. But, now began the extraordinary part of this remarkable story. Tidings came from Ramorantin, a town on the other side of Nerbonne, that Monsieur de la Pivardière had been seen there alive and well subsequently to the fifteenth of August, the night of his asserted murder. Madame de la Pivardière continued to assert her innocence, and caused search to be everywhere made for her husband. From the letter that had roused her jealousy, she had an idea that he would be found at Auxerre or in the neighbourhood. On inquiry, the whole story of his marriage under the name of Bouchet, and of his having filled the situation of huissier, came to light. Bouchet, or more properly La Pivardière, himself, had been at Auxerre within the last few days; but had departed suddenly. The messengers sent by his wife tracked him and came up with him at Flavique. He was alive and well, and no one had ever made the least attempt to murder him. His account of himself was straightforward enough, and fully explained all that was mysterious in his disappearance.

"Scarcely," said he, "had I retired to my room on the night of my return to Nerbonne, when Catherine Lemoins came to me and told me that if I remained till morning in the château I ran the risk of being arrested. I knew that I had committed bigamy, and I knew that I should certainly be hanged if it were brought home to me. Fearing that my wife was in possession of the facts, and that she had determined to prosecute me, I did not neglect the timely warning the girl had given me. At four in the morning I left the château. I left my horse behind, because it was lame; indeed, I had been obliged to lead it the evening before, when I arrived. I did not wish to encumber myself with any luggage; I therefore left my cloak, my gun, and my riding-boots. I stopped the whole of the next day at Bourg Dieu. On the seventeenth I arrived at Châteauroux, and lodged for the night at the sign of the Three Merchants. On the eighteenth, I stopped at Issoudun, at the sign of The Clock, and thence I made my way to Auxerre, where I thought myself in safety from all pursuit."

When he was told of the danger to which his disappearance had exposed his wife, he was greatly distressed, but fancied that it would be an easy matter to set all right. He went before a notary and executed a deed, testifying to his identity, signed it, and had it properly formalised. He wrote to his wife and to his brother, telling them of his existence. That was not enough; his bodily presence was necessary. His second wife showed herself good and noble; she never reproached him, and showed no anxiety except that Madame de la Pivardière should be delivered from her painful position. She urged her husband's departure, and, though fully aware of the risk he ran, he did not hesitate to set off for Nerbonne. On his arrival there, he found the château entirely gutted; nothing but the bare walls remaining. He was obliged to go to his brother's house.

He presented himself before the Judge of Ramorantin, and demanded that he might prove his identity at all the places in and about Nerbonne, where he was so well known, which was accordingly done. At Lucé, he was recognised by the curé, by all the officers of the jurisdiction, and by a dozen of the inhabitants. At the village of Jeu, he entered church during vespers, and his arrival caused such a sensation, that the service was interrupted; every one there had fully believed him murdered, and they imagined it was his ghost which they now beheld. At length they were satisfied that it was the real

La Pivardière; more than two hundred persons swore to his identity; the curé confirmed it; and his testimony could not well be suspected, as he was to succeed the Prior of Miseray, who as accomplice in the murder would lose all his benefices. He saw his little girl, who had given such fatal evidence against her mother, and she recognised him at once for her father. At Miseray every one knew him.

The Lieutenant-particulier of Chatillon, who had been the first to set the inquiry on foot, came to the reservoir at Nerbonne to search for the body of La Pivardière, who, being informed of the fact, presented himself before this functionary, and said:

"Do not lose time in dragging the waters for what you may find upon the banks."

The lieutenant, thinking he saw a ghost, was seized with such terror, that he turned his horse's head and galloped off at full speed. All this might have been deemed convincing; but when, as a last satisfaction, De la Pivardière presented himself at the prison of Châteauroux, where the two female servants were confined, they both declared him to be an impostor.

One of them afterwards declared that the Lieutenant-particulier had ordered them with threats to disavow their master. What makes this somewhat probable is, that he had given strict orders that no one should be allowed to enter the prison or to see the prisoners; and he made a formal complaint against the judge and prévôt of Ramorantin, who had accompanied De la Pivardière.

The Procureur-général of Chatillon ordered a decree to be registered for the arrest of M. de la Pivardière, that further measures might be taken for ascertaining the truth. This coming to his ears, La Pivardière, who could not run the risk of standing a trial for bigamy, which would in all likelihood have followed, did not stop to be arrested, but escaped from Chatillon in all haste, being assisted by the Lieutenant-général of Ramorantin. This magistrate drew up a statement, testifying to the identity of the Sieur de la Pivardière, which was signed by all his family; and then he departed to Auxerre, hoping he had left things in train for a speedy ending. But, the intricate machinery of French justice, once set in motion, was not to be so easily stopped. All the different officials who had been engaged in the inquiry began to quarrel about their prerogatives, each declaring that the others had infringed his jurisdiction. The Lieutenant-particulier of Chatillon, who had been the first to stir in the affair, still persisted in drawing up a procès-verbal concerning the murder of a man who had proved himself to be alive! The Procureur-général took part with the officials of Chatillon; the Judge of Ramorantin, the friend of La Pivardière, was reprimanded for meddling with what was not within his jurisdiction. The Prior of Miseray was arrested, heavily ironed, and thrown into a dungeon. The case had become highly curious. There were De la Pivardière himself, his wife, and the Prior on one side, declaring that there had been no murder whatever committed; on the other side, there was the Lieutenant-particulier and the Procureur du Roi for Chatillon sur l'Indre, who insisted on proving, for the sake of public justice, that M. de la Pivardière had been effectually murdered, although no trace of his body could be found.

In this dilemma the Sieur de la Pivardière petitioned for a safe-conduct for four months, that he might appear in person, as his absence gave some colour to the assertion of the opposite party, that he was an impostor; but, without this safe-conduct he could not appear, because he would certainly have been tried for his bigamy and hanged. Except to those well versed in the method and technicalities of the French courts of justice of those days, it would be hopeless to attempt to render the course pursued in this case intelligible; there were pleadings before one magistrate, and counter-pleadings before another; instructions, counter-instructions, and re-instructions; judgments pronounced which were to prejudice neither party; and decisions the intention of which was to place everybody in the position they were before the pleadings began; and after fifteen days' arguing the cause it was remitted to another court to begin it afresh.

The venue, as we should term it, of the case, was changed to Chartres, and the prisoners were transferred to the prison of that city. At this stage of the matter, the second wife of M. de la Pivardière showed herself thoroughly generous. Moved with pity for all parties, she went to Versailles; and, through the interest of some influential persons, obtained an audience with the king, and entreated him to grant M. de la Pivardière a royal safe-conduct that he might appear without danger. Louis the Fourteenth—who had been informed of all the circumstances—treated her with great kindness, granted her request, and said that such a beautiful woman ought to have had a better fate.

Armed with this safe-conduct, which was dated Versailles, twenty-sixth August, sixteen hundred and ninety-eight, De la Pivardière surrendered himself, and became a prisoner in Fort l'Evêque, at Paris, in order, as he declared, to substantiate that he was actually Louis de la Pivardière, squire, sieur de Bouchet, and husband to the lady Marguérite de Chauvelier. At length the cause came to a hearing. The most celebrated advocates in France were employed on both sides; and, after many days pleading, when who was then the advocate-general, and afterwards chancellor of France, made a speech full of force and eloquence, in favour of Madame de la Pivardière and the others

who had been with her. In spite of this, the judges were divided in their opinion, but at last pronounced in favour of the accused, and ordered them to be set at liberty. This, however, was not to be done so easily. M. de la Pivardière was set at liberty because he had rendered himself a voluntary prisoner; but, for the others, the meshes of the law were deliberately unravelled, according to the strictest forms. They were only placed in the position they were in before they were arrested. It was now necessary to prove that the deposition of the servants on whose testimony the accused had been arrested, was false. A trial was ordered. Before it came on, one of the women—Catherine Lemoins—died, and as it is gravely recorded, "Death quashed the prosecution against her." The trial, however, as regarded Catherine Lemercier went on, and was at last concluded. She was condemned to stand barefoot, a cord round her neck, a lighted torch of two pounds weight in her hand, before the principal gate of Chatillon sur l'Indre, and there kneeling down to declare, in a loud voice, that she had wickedly and maliciously and with evil intent, made the false statement set forth on the trial; for which she asked pardon of God, the king, and justice. After this, she was to be severely beaten with rods at all the chief thoroughfares; to be branded on the right shoulder; all she had in the world to be confiscated, and a fine from her goods to be paid to the king; she was to be banished for life to a certain distance, under pain of death if she returned. As to Madame Pivardière, and the prior, and other servants, they were declared quite innocent of murder, and even Madame's character as a wife was declared intact; and that there had never been any cause for scandal about the prior. All the accusations which had been registered against them were ordered to be blotted out, and all the parties were dismissed from the court. This decree was pronounced on the fourteenth of June, seventeen hundred and one; when the case had lasted four years all but about six weeks.

Notwithstanding the official clearing of her character, M. de la Pivardière held to his own opinion respecting his wife's conduct with the prior; he refused to return to Nerbonne; and as his relationship to his second wife was quite upset, he obtained a small appointment from the Duc de Feuillade, who was his relation; he soon afterwards was killed at the head of his brigade in an encounter with some smugglers. His wife did not long survive. One morning the poor woman was found dead in her bed.

The second wife married again after her husband's death. All the four children of her first marriage died young. Her second husband died also, and she married again for the third time, and lived and died much respected.

The Prior of Miseray, who was the cause of all the woe, broke off all acquaintance with Madame de la Pivardière, and lived to a great age, dying at last peacefully in his convent.

JOHN HOUGHTON'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

John Houghton, as was explained in the former article,* published the folio edition of his curious newspaper or magazine of universal knowledge, between the years sixteen hundred and ninety-two and seventeen hundred and three—comprising the greater part of the reign of William the Third. In the first year of that period his weekly sheet was filled with the miscellaneous communications already noticed, garnished with such scraps of home news as the following:—"This session, at the Old Bailey, twenty received sentence of death; twelve to be burned in the hand; four were ordered into their Majesties' service; five were order'd to be whipt." "On Tuesday last, at the whipping-post in Tuttle Fields, near Westminster, a pedlar was severely whipt for hawking about linen cloth." Or such pickings from the London Gazette as the following:—"That the late Governor of Hydelburg was degraded of all honours, and sent over the Neckar with the hangman, having first received all contempt imaginable;—that an usual threepenny loaf is sold in the French camp for twelve pence, and quart of beer at the same price;—that on the twenty-five instant, was launched at Deptford the Falmouth of fifty guns, built by Edward Snellgrave at his new dock there; which is all I see useful for posterity."

But with the commencement of his second volume, Houghton enlarged his work in order to admit advertisements. The former sheet of one leaf, or two pages, had been sold for a penny. "Any one may have these papers brought to their houses for a penny the week, in London; and at the same price within the compass of the penny post, if the messengers be spoke to; or else anywhere in England, if a dozen will agree and speak to their bookseller or carrier." It is not clear whether this penny was or was not superadded to the charge for the paper itself; but be this as it may, no additional charge was made for the advertisement leaf subsequently appended. Houghton probably received a fee sufficient to cover the expenses. In his announcement of the change, he said: "This advertisement part is to give away, and those who like it not may omit the reading. I believe it will help on trade, particularly encourage the advertisers to increase the vent of my papers. I shall receive all sorts of advertisements, but shall answer for the reasonableness of none, unless I give thereof a particular character, on which (as I shall give it) may be dependance."

* Household Words, No. 348, page 453.

In this, as in all things else, there was a quaintness of manner in Houghton's dealings with his readers. If he touted for advertisements, he did it in very gentle and candid manner. "Whether," says he, "'tis worth while to give an account of ships set in for lading, or ships arrived; with the like for coaches and carriers; or to give notice of approaching fairs, and what commodities are chiefly sold there, I must submit to the judgment of those concerned." And if his dealings in this way at any time fell short in quantity, he announced the plain fact without quirk or quibble:—"For want of enough advertisements by reason 'tis long vacation, I shall omit them this week, but go on again as they shall come in."

The advertisements which appear in a public journal take rank among the most significant indications of the state of society at that time and place. The wants, the wishes, the means, the employments, the books, the amusements, the medicines, the trade, the economy of domestic households, the organisation of wealthy establishments, the relation between masters and servants, the wages paid to workmen, the rents paid for houses, the prices charged for commodities, the facilities afforded for travelling, the materials and fashions for dress, the furniture and adornments of houses, the varieties and systems of schools, the appearance and traffic of towns—all receive illustration from such sources. It would be possible to write a very good social history of England during the last two centuries, from the information furnished by advertisements alone.

When John Houghton first put forth his extra sheet or leaf, the advertisements sent to him related chiefly to books—either new ones to be published, or old ones for sale. Occasionally we meet with announcements of works which have since become classical; frequently the polemical spirit bursts forth; and little less frequently is the sermon-writing taste of that age illustrated, as in Mr. George Hutchinson's Forty-five Sermons on the Hundred and Thirtieth Psalm. But the large majority of works, as may be expected, have long been forgotten; witness the Essay on Unequal Marriages, by S. Bufford, Gent., in which the author argues against old persons marrying with young; against persons marrying without friends' consent; and against persons marrying without their own consent.

Very shortly, however, lottery advertisements became plentiful. Thomas Neale, Esquire, Groom Porter to their Majesties (William and Mary), announced that in the lotteries carried on at that time in Venice, more than thirty-three per cent. was detained for the use of the undertakers; whereas in a lottery about to be established by him, only ten per cent. would be deducted, to pay for all trouble, hazard, and charges. This lottery was to contain one prize of three thousand pounds, and other golden treasures; and among the trustees named were Sir Francis Child and Richard Hoare, names perpetuated to this day within bell-sound of St. Dunstan's. Lotteries became announced for all sorts of objects, generally as a means of getting off a large stock of some particular kind of goods. One will suffice as an example of all:—"At the Indian warehouse, at the sign of the Black Bell, in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, by Joseph Rose and Elizabeth Madox, will be delivered out twelve thousand tickets at half-a-crown each; and there shall be also twelve thousand blank tickets prepared, two hundred and fifty whereof shall be made benefits; which said benefits shall contain in goods to the value above mentioned." The benefits in prizes varied from two pounds to a hundred and fifty pounds value; and as their aggregate amount equalled the amount to be paid for all the tickets, we may charitably conclude that a very remunerative price was set upon the Japan goods, china jars, Indian silks, fans, muslins, screens, and cabinets, that constituted the collection—a principle not unknown to the concocters of modern distributions.

Next, the miscellaneous advertisements began to appear, in all their wonted variety. The Vauxhall pottery, well known to connoisseurs, is brought to our notice in the following advertisement: "There is found near Faux Hall, in Surrey, a sort of clay used to make all sorts of tea-pots, well-approved on by most toy-shops about the Exchange, and are hardly discerned from China and other pots from beyond sea, being very exact in colour, strength, and shape, and lately applied to this use by two Dutch brothers, whose names are Eelin." Matrimonial advertisements were not scarce, such as one from "A gentleman about thirty years of age, who has a very good estate, would willingly match himself to some good young gentlewoman that has a fortune of three thousand pounds or thereabouts." Sometimes, the mode of obtaining what is wanted, or getting rid of what is not wanted, is very droll. Of the latter class, the following is an example: "A witty, arch boy, that is apt to play by the way when he goes of erranda, would be disposed to a captain or master of ship, if any wants such." One remarkable advertisement relates to a new stage-coach set up between London and Norwich, started and supported by a joint-stock company of two hundred persons, on the ground that "no single person, or five or six in company, would venture to set up a new stage;" the enterprise was called for because "the stage coaches that are driven between London and Norwich have, for several years last past, been so ill performed that the passengers travelling therein have been very much incommoded, and the journeying of the said coaches rendered very irksome and burdensome." All

that the company cleared above ten per cent. was to be given to the poor. Wonderful balsams; charms to be worn for the repulsion of diseases; prophetic warnings drawn from the Apocalypse; pure water laid on in pipes from the White Conduit; beatific poems on her late sacred Majesty Queen Mary—all were thrown together, on terms of equality, in these advertising pages.

But perhaps more curious than any advertisements inserted by John Houghton in his weekly journal on the part of others are those which sprang more immediately from himself—as a commission-agent for all sorts of people on all sorts of subjects. He first began by announcing his own dealings in chocolate, at that time a somewhat costly luxury: "I have two sorts, both made of the best suets, without spice or perfume, the one five shillings and the other six shillings the pound, and with vinelloes (vanilla) and spices, at seven shillings the pound. I'll answer for their goodness. If I shall think fit to sell any other sorts, I'll give notice." At a later date, he announced his excellent sago and German spa water. But the advertisements now more especially under notice are those in which he evidently acted for others. His language on such occasions has a brevity, clearness, and precision of outline—an absence of roundabout verbiage and hollow quackery, that renders them quite pleasant contrasts to certain other advertisements of a hundred and sixty years later. We will string a number of these pearls together, just as we find them, and form them into a paragraph.

"A bunch of six keys, with a little silver seal hanging on a string, were found in Gracechurch Street last Saturday; I can give an account of them.—One that is well qualified to wait upon a gentleman, desires some such an employment. He looks gracefully, has had the small-pox, can give security for his fidelity, and can be well recommended.—For a boy about thirteen year old, I want a handicraft master, that deserves from ten to twenty pound.—If any have an advowson worth one hundred pounds a-year, in a good air, I can help him to a customer. —I want an apprentice for a packer of very good trade.—I can give an account of an estate not far from this, of twelve hundred pounds the year, to be sold in gross or parcels.—I want a negro man that is a good house carpenter or a good shoemaker.—There is a good large house-organ to be sold at Chelsea.—I want apprentice for a cheesemonger.—I have met with a curious gardener that will furnish anybody that sends to me for fruit-trees and florent-shrubs and garden-seeds. I have made him promise with all solemnity that whatever he sends me shall be purely good; and I verily believe he may be depended on.—A friend of mine has fifteen gallon of spirit of elderberries for sale, and I have a sample of them.—Whoever will have their head drawn, I can tell how it may be done at near half the common rates which the gentleman draws for, and yet as well as if the utmost value was paid.—I now want a second-hand chariot.—One that has waited upon a lady divers years, and understands all affairs belonging to housekeeping and the needle, desires some such place. She seems a discreet, staid body.—I have divers manuscript sermons to sell.—I can help to any parcel of flower of brimstone. —If any justice of peace wants a clerk, I can help to one that has been so seven years, understands accounts, to be a butler, also to receive money. He also can shave, and buckle wigga."

This curious collection, picked out indiscriminately, will afford some idea of John Houghton's commission agency during the first five years of his folio publication; and by another paragraph of similar bits, it will be seen that the commercial activity did not in anywise lessen during the second and concluding period of five years. "I want an impropriation worth seven or eight hundred pounds.—I would buy any parcel of buck's bones.—If any bricklayer, carpenter, or such like, will go to the American plantations, I can direct him how, with his interest.—If any want an apothecary's shop well furnished, within the city, I can help.—I want a mate and apprentice fit for a chirurgion of a great East India ship.—If any can help to a place worth six hundred pounds, I can help to a customer.—If any shopkeeper in London will lett the best of his house up stayers, I can help to a customer.—If I can meet with a sober man that has a counter-tenor voice, I can help him to a place worth thirty pound the year or more.—If any noble or other gentleman want a porter that is very lusty, comely, and six foot high and two inches, I can help.—The cook shop in St. Bartholomew Lane, behind the Exchange, is to be lett; I can tell further.—If any want a wet-nurse, I can help them, as I am inform'd, to a very good one. I have a large parcel of excellent Diapalma-plaster.—Within four miles of London, in a very pleasant place, is an ancient Grammar School, with the scholars, to be disposed of.—I want a neat and fashionable coach, with glasses before.—If any decay'd gentleman has a pretty son about twelve year old, I can help him to be a page to a person of honor.—I know of a house worth £2000, with a door into St. James's Park, to be sold or lett.—I sell lozenges for sixpence the ounce, which several commend against heart-burning.—I want a clerk for a valuable Attorney in the Common Pleas.—If any want a maid to wait on them, I can help to one that is extraordinarily well recommended, and in all likelihood will prove well.—I know of a single gentleman within twelve miles of London, and pleasant air, that has a very good house

well furnished; but it is too big for him; therefore if some gentleman and his wife, or single gentleman, would live with him, he will board with them, or they shall board with him.—I want a compleat young man that will wear a livery, to wait on a very valuable gentleman; but he must know how to play on a violin or flute.—An acquaintance of mine, who alone prepares Fair Rosamond's Odoriferous Beautifying Balsam for the hands and face, has desired me to convey it to such as shall want the same.—One that has been very well bred, and understands the bass-viol to a good degree, also all sorts of needle-work, particularly the working of beds and petticotes, desires to wait on some lady or gentlewoman, or teach some young ones; she would make a tite graceful servant, as she looks.—I have to sell a parcel of printed titles, fit for pots, glasses, or boxes of all sizes, not differing much for gilding or painting.—If any wants a serving-man, I can help to one that looks comely, has good friends, and could be very compliant.—If any can help to a good annuity for two or three hundred pounds, I can help to one will take it.—I want a genteel footman that can play on the violin, to wait on a person of honour.—A handsome Black about thirteen years old, that has been in England four years, and speaks good English and can wait at table, is to be sold.—Whoever will sell a good penny-worth of anything, I can help to money as far as two thousand pounds.—I want divers good cook-maids.—If any want all kind of necessaries for Corps or Funerals, I can help to one who does assure me he will use them kindly.—I know of several men and women whose friends would gladly have them match'd, which I'll endeavour to do, as from time to time I shall hear of such whose circumstances are likely to agree; and I'll assure such as will come to me, it shall be done with all the honour and secrecy imaginable; their own parents shall not manage it more to their satisfaction; and the more comes to me, the better I shall be able to serve 'em."

John Houghton, to his other occupations and honours of editor, statist, political economist, expositor of productive industry, naturalist, Fellow of the Royal Society, friend to the Sloanes and Halleys of those days, apothecary, dealer in groceries, and commission-agent, added that of matchmaker in behoof of young ladies and gentlemen.

PATIENT AND FAITHFUL.

You have taken back the promise
That you spoke so long ago;
Taken back the heart you gave me;
I must even let it go.
Where Love once hath breathed, Pride dieth:
I have struggled, but in vain,
First to keep the links together,
Then to piece the broken chain.

But it might not be—so freely
All your friendship I restore,
And the heart that I had taken
As my own for evermore.
No shade of blame shall cloud you,
Dread no more a claim from me;
But I will not have you fancy
That I count myself as free.

I am bound with the old promise;
What can break that golden chain?
Not the words that you have spoken,
Nor the sharpness of my pain:
Do you think, because you fail me
And draw back your hand to-day,
That from out the heart I gave you
My strong love can fade away?

It will live. No eyes may see it.
In my soul it will lie deep,
Hid from all; but I shall feel it
Often stirring in its sleep.
So remember, that the friendship
Which you now think poor and vain,
Will endure in hope and patience,
Till you ask for it again.

Perhaps in some long twilight hour,
Like those we have known of old,
Past shadows gathering round you,
When your present friends grow cold,
You may stretch your hands towards me,
Ah! you will—I know not when—
I shall nurse my love and keep it
For you, faithfully, till then.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

THE SLOBODA. A RUSSIAN VILLAGE.

This is the Sloboda, or village, say of Volnoï-Voloschtchok, and there are five hundred villages like it. Still you are to know that Volnoï-Voloschtchok is some twenty imperial versts from the government town of Rjew, in the government of Twer, and as all men should know, about half-way to Moscow the Holy; the Staraï, or old town, as the Russians lovingly term it, and which holds the nearest place in their affections to Kieff the Holiest, which they call the mother of Russian cities. This, then is the seigneural sloboda of Volnoï (as we will conclude to call it, for shortness); and you are now to hear all about it, and its lord and master.

I have come from Twer on the Volga, on what in Bohemian euphuism is known as the Grand Scud. This, though difficult of exact translation, may be accepted as implying a sort of purposeless journeying—a viatorial meandering—a pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Haphazard—an expedition in which charts, compasses, and chronometers have been left behind as needless impediments, and in which any degree of latitude the traveller may happen to find himself in, is cheerfully accepted as an accomplished fact.

On the Grand Scud then, with a pocket-book passably well-lined with oleaginous

rouble notes, and a small wardrobe in a leathern bag, I have come with my friend, ALEXIS HARDSHELLOVITCH. You start at my fellow-traveller's patronymic, sounding, as it does, much more of a New York oyster-cellar than of a district in the Government of Twer. Here is the meaning of Hardshellovitch. Alexis, though a noble Russian of innumerable descents, and of unmistakeable Tartar lineage, though wearing (at St. Petersburg), the rigorous helmet, sword, and choking suit; though one of the corps of imperial pages, and hoping to be a Hussar of Grodno by this time next year, is in speech, habits, and manners, an unadulterated citizen of the smartest nation in the creation. For Alexis' father, the general, was for many years Russian Minister Plenipotentiary at Washington in the district of Hail Columbia! U. S. While there, he very naturally fell in love with, and married, one of the beautiful young daughters of that land; and Alexis was the satisfactory result. After a hesitation of some seventy years' standing, the general diplomatically made his mind up to die, and his family availed themselves of the circumstance to bury him, Madame the ex-Ambassadress remained in Washington, and his son, being destined for the Russian service, was sent to St. Petersburg to be educated. Fancy the young Anacharsis being sent from Athenian Academe to be educated among the Scythians, or imagine Mrs. HOBSON NEWCOME of Bryanstone Square sending one of her dear children to be brought up among the Zulu Kaffirs! The unfortunate Alexis was addressed, with care, to two ancient aunts (on the Muscovite side), in the Italianskaia Oulitsa at St. Petersburg. These ladies were of the old Russian way of thinking; spoke not a word of French, took grey snuff; drank mint-brandy, and fed the young neophyte (accustomed to the luxurious fare of a diplomatic cuisine and Washington table d'hôtes), on Stchi (cabbage soup), Batwinja (cold fish soup), pirogues (meat pies), and kvass. He had been used to sit under the Reverend Dr. D. Slocum Whittler (Regenerated-Rowdy persuasion), in a neat white-washed temple, where lyric aspirations to Zion were sung to the music of Moore's Melodies; he suddenly found himself in a land where millions of people bow down billions of times every day, to trillions of sacred Saracen's-Heads. He was soon removed to the École des Pages—that grand, gilt, gingerbread structure (I do not call it so as in any way reflecting on its flimsiness, but because it is, outwardly, the exact colour of under-done ginger-bread, profusely ornamented with gold leaf), in the Sadovvaïa, and which was formerly the palace of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Here, he found French, German, and English professors; but though he has been four years a page, the poor lad has been in a continual state of bewilderment ever since he left America. He has scarcely, as yet, mastered the first flight of the Giant's Staircase of Russian lexicology, the Russian gift of tongues seems denied to him; his French smacks of German, and his German of French; and his English, which, miserable youth, is of all languages the one he delights most to speak, is getting into an ancient and fishy condition. He misses his grammatical tip, frequently. He has an extensive salad of languages in his head; but he has broken the vinegar-cruet, and mislaid the oil-flask, and can't find the hard-boiled eggs. All his sympathies are Anglo-Saxon. He likes roast-meat, cricket, boating, and jovial conversation; and he is hand and foot a slave to the Dutch-doll-with-an-iron-mask discipline of the imperial pages, and the imperial court, and the imperial prisoners'-van and county-gaol system generally. He is fond of singing comic songs. He had better not be too funny in Russia; there is a hawk with a double head, in the next room. He is (as far as he has sense enough to be), a republican in principle. The best thing he can do is to learn by heart, and keep repeating the Anglican litany, substituting Good Czar for Good Lord. What a terrible state of things for an inoffensive and well-meaning young man! Not to know whether he is on his head or his heels, morally. To be neither flesh, nor fowl, nor good red herring, nationally. I wonder how many years it will take him to become entirely Russian: how long he will be before he will learn to dance, and perform the ceremony of the kou-tou—I mean, the court bow—and leave off telling the truth, keeping the eighth commandment, and looking people straight in the face. Not very long, I am afraid. The Russian academical course of moral ethics is but a short curriculum; and, once matriculated, you graduate rapidly. In no other country but Russia—not even in our own sunsetless empire, with its myriad tributaries—can you find such curious instances of de-nationalisation. Alexis Hardshellovitch had a friend, whose acquaintance I had also the honour of making, who was also in the Corps des Pages, and who came to samovarise, or take tea with us, one evening, in patent-leather boots and white kid gloves; and who talked so prettily about potichomanie and Mademoiselle Bagdanoff, the ballet-dancer (all in the purest Parisian), that I expected the next subjects of his conversation would be Shakspeare and the musical glasses. What do you imagine his name was? Genghis Khan! (pronounced Zinghis Kahn). He was of the creamiest Tartar extraction, and mincingly confessed that he was descended in a direct line from that Conqueror. He was a great prince at home; but the Russians had mediatised him, and he was to be an officer in the Mussulman escort of the Czar. He had frequently partaken of roast horse in his boyhood, and knew where the best tap of mares' milk was, down Mongolian-Tartary way, I have no doubt; but I have seen him

eat ices at Dominique's on the Nevskoï with much grace, and he was quite a lady's man.

Alexis Hardshellovitch does not feel his exceptional and abnormal position to any painful extent; inasmuch as, though one of the worthiest and most amiable fellows alive, he is a tremendous fool. He is a white Russian,—not coming from White Russia, understand, but with white eyelashes, and fawn-coloured hair, and a suety complexion, and eyes that have not been warranted to wash, for they have run terribly, and the ground-colour has been quite boiled out of them. He has a glimmering, but not decided notion, of his want of brains himself. "I know I am ugly," he candidly says; "my dear good mother always told me so, and my father, who was bel homme, used to hit me cracks because I had such large ears. I must be ugly, because the Director of the Corps has never selected me to be sent to the palace as a page of the chamber. I should like to be a page of the chamber, for they wear chamarrures of gold bullion on their skirts behind; but they only pick out the handsome pages. They say I should give the Empress an attack of nerves with my ears. Yet I am a general and ambassador's son. I. Some—" He spits. "But I'm not a fool. No; I guess not. Prince Bouillabaissoff says I am bête; but Genghis Khan tells me that I have the largest head of all the imperial pages. How can I be a fool with such a large head? Tell." The honest youth has, it must be admitted, an enormous nut. Though I love him for his goodness and simplicity, I am conscious always of an uneasy desire to take that head of his between my hands, as if it were indeed a nut, and of the cocoa species, and crack it against a stone wall, to see if there be any milk to be accounted for, inside.

I have been staying, in this broiling midsummer mad-dog weather, at the hospitable country mansion of Alexis Hardshellovitch's aunts; and we two have come on the Grand Send in a respectable old calêche, supposed to have been purchased in France by the diplomatic general during the occupation of Paris by the allies in eighteen hundred and fifteen. It has been pieced and repaired by two generations of Russian coach-cobblers since; has been re-lined with some fancy stuff which I believe to have been, in the origin, window-curtains; the vehicle, probably, has not been painted since the Waterloo campaign, but the wheels are plentifully greased; we have an ample provision of breaks and drags, and "skids;" we have three capital horses—one a little black Bitchok—lithe, limber, long-maned and vicious, but an admirable galloper, and dressée à la volée, and we have a very paragon of a postilion or coachman—I scarcely know whether to call him Ischvostchik or Jemstchik, for now he sits on the box; and now he bestrides the splashboard, where the splinter-bar is his brother, and the traces make acquaintance with his boots. I say he is a paragon; for he can go a week without getting drunk, never falls asleep on the box, and however bad the roads may be, never lands the calêche in a deep hole. Inexhaustibly good-tempered and untiringly musical he is, of course: he would not be a Russian else. He belongs to Alexis—or rather, will do so at his majority; when that large-headed page will possess much land and many beeves—human beeves, I mean with beards and boots, and baggy breeches. But I don't think that Alexis will administer much STICK to his slaves when he comes to his kingdom. He has a hard shell, but a soft heart.

It is lucky we have Petr' Petrovitch the paragon with us in our journey from Rjew, for we have long left the great Moscow Road (I don't speak of the rail but of the chaussée) and have turned into an abominable Sentier de Traverse, a dreadful region, where marshes have had the black vomit, and spumed lumps of misshapen raven-like forest—black roots of trees—inky jungles, so to speak. Can you imagine anything more horrible than a dwarf-forest—for the trees are never tall hereabout—stems and branches hugger-muggering close together like conspirators weaving some diabolical plot, with here and there a gap of marsh pool between the groups of trees, as if some woodland criminals, frightened at their own turpitude, had despairingly drowned themselves, and ridded the earth of their black presence. Some corpses of these float on the surface of the marsh, but the summer time has been as merciful to them as the redbreasts were to the children in the wood, and has covered them with a green pall. There must be capital teal, and widgeon, and snipe-shooting here, in autumn—shooting enough to satisfy that insatiate sportsman, Mr. Ivan Tourguénieff; but, at present, the genus homo does not shoot. He is shot by reddart from the inexhaustible quiver of the sun. He does not hunt; he is hunted by rolling clouds of pungent dust, by disciplined squadrons of gnats, and by flying cohorts of blue bottles and gadflies. The sun has baked the earth into angular clods, and our calêche and horses go hopping over the acclivities like a daddy-long-legs weak in the knee-joints over a home-baked crusty loaf. There is no cultivation in this part—no trees—no houses. I begin to grow as hotly thirsty as on that famous day when I drank out of POT, walking twenty miles, from Lancaster to Preston; but out of evil cometh good in Russian travelling. As you are perfectly certain, before starting, that you will not find any houses of entertainment on the road, except at stated distances; and that the refreshments provided there will probably be intolerable, no person in a sane mental condition either rides or drives a dozen miles in the country without taking with him a

complete apparatus for inward restoration. We have a comfortable square box covered with tin, which unthinking persons might rashly assume to be a dressing-case, but which in reality contains a pint-and-a-half samovar; a store of fine charcoal thereunto belonging; a tchaïnik, or tea-pot of terra cotta, tea-cups, knives, forks, and tea-canister. If we were real Russians—hot as it is—we should incite Petr' Petrovitch to kindle a fire, heat the samovar, and set to tea-drinking with much gusto. As we have Anglo-Saxon notions, if not blood, we resort to that other compartment of the tin chest where the mighty case-bottle of cold brandy and water is—large, squab, flat, and fitting into the bottom of the box. Then, each lighting a papiros, we throw ourselves back in the calêche. Petr' Petrovitch has not been forgotten in the case-bottle line, and bid our conductor to resume the grandest of Scuds. We have an indefinite idea that we shall come upon one of Prince Bouillabaissoff's villages in an hour or so. This, too, is about the time to tell you that Alexis, though an imperial page, is clad in a Jim Crow hat, a baker's jacket, nankeen pantaloons, and a Madras handkerchief loosely tied round his turn-down shirt collar. These are the vacations of the imperial pages—very long vacations they have—from May to August, and once in the country Alexis may dress as he pleases; but, in St. Petersburg, it would be as much as his large ears are worth to appear without the regulation choke outfit—the sword, casque, belt, and, to use an expression of Mumchance, "coat buttoned up to here." Friend of my youth! why canst thou not come with me from the Rents of Tattyboys to All the Russias? For here thou wouldst find, not one or two, but millions of men, all with their coats buttoned up to here.

I said ONE of Prince Bouillabaissoff's villages, for the prince is a proprietor on a large scale, and owns nearly a dozen, containing in all some twenty hundred douscha (souls) or serfs. But our grand scud principle is vindicated when we diverge from the marshes and the baked clods into the commencement of a smooth well-kept road, and learn from Petr' Petrovitch, whom we have hitherto foreborne interrogating, that we are approaching the village of M. de Katorichassoff.

The good Russian roads are oases between deserts. In the immediate vicinity of the seigneur's residence the roads are beautifully kept. No English park avenue could surpass them in neatness, regularity, smoothness—nay, prettiness and cheerfulness. There are velvety platebandes of greensward by the roadside, and graceful poplars, and sometimes elms. But once out of the baron's domains, and even the outlying parts of his territory, the roads—high and bye—become the pitiable paths of travail and ways of tribulation, of which I have hinted in the Czar's Highway. There is a humorous fiction that the proprietors of the soil are bound to keep the public roads in order, and another legend—but more satirical than humorous—that the government pays a certain yearly sum for the well-keeping of the roads. Government money is an ignis fatuical and impalpable thing in Russia. You may pay, but you do not receive. As to the proprietors they will see the government barbacued before they will do anything they are not absolutely compelled to do; and the upshot of the matter is, that a problem something like the following is offered for solution. If two parties are bound to perform a contract of mutual service, and neither party performs it, which party has a right to complain?

M. de Katorichassoff, however—or rather Herr Vandergutlers, his North German bourmister, or intendant, for the noble Barinn is no resident just now (Hombourg, roulette, and so forth)—would very soon know the reason why all the roads about the seigneurial village were not kept in apple-pie order. They say that in Tsarskoe-Selo palace gardens, near Petersburg, there is a corporal of invalids to run after every stray leaf that has fallen from a tree, and a police officer to take every unauthorised pebble on the gravel walks into custody. Without going so far as this, it is certain that there are plenty of peasants, mis à corvée, that is, working three compulsory days' labour for the lord, to mend and trim the roads, clip the platebandes, and prune the trees; and the result is, ultimately, a charmingly umbrageous avenue through which we make our entrance into Volnoi-Voloschtchok.

Though M. de K. (you will excuse the rest of the name, I know) has only one village, he has determined to do everything in it en grand seigneur. He has a church and a private police-station, and a common granary for corn; and, wonder of wonders, he has a wooden watch-tower surmounted by a circular iron balcony, and with the customary apparatus of telegraphic signals in case of fire. As you can see the whole of the village of Volnoi—its one street, the château of the Barinn, and the mill of Mestrophan-Kouprianoritch—at one glance, standing on the level ground, and as there are no other buildings for ten miles round, the utility of a watch-tower does not seem very obvious. Still, let us have discipline, or die. So there were watchmen, I suppose, at one time; but the balcony is tenantless now, and one of the yellow balls is in a position, according to the telegraphic code, denoting a raging conflagration somewhere. There is nothing on fire, that I know of, except the sun. Where is the watchman, too? There are plenty of vigorous old men with long white beards, who would enact to the life the part of that dreary old sentinel in Agamemnon the King, who, in default of fire, or water, or the enemy, or whatever else he is looking out for, prognosticates such dismal things about

Clytemnestra's goings on and the state of Greece generally. Why didn't the terrible queen kill that old bore, same time she murdered her husband? He has been prosing from that watch-tower going on three thousand years. There seems to be no necessity, either, for the watch-tower to have any windows, but broken ones, or any door save four shameful old planks hanging by one wooden hinge, and for the hot sun to glare fiercely through crevices in the walls that have not been made by the wood shrinking, but by the absence of part or parcel of the walls themselves. Why empty balcony, why broken windows, why wooden hinges, why one hinge, why yawning walls? This: the lord is at Hombourg (—actress of the Folies Dramatiques—run of ill-luck on the red, and so forth), and Herr Vandergutler's, his intendant's, paramount business is to send him silver roubles. More silver roubles, and yet more! So those of his serfs who pay him a yearly rent, or obrok, have had that obrok considerably increased; and those who were à corvée have been compelled to go upon obrok; and everybody, man, woman, and child, patriarch and young girl, have been pinched, pressed, screwed, and squeezed, beaten, harassed, cozened, bullied, driven, and dragged by the North German intendant for more silver roubles—more silver roubles still—for M. de Katorichassoff, at Hombourg. There the man who deals the cards, and the woman who rouges her face, divide the Russian prince's roubles between them (a simple seigneur here, he is Prince Katorichassoff at Hombourg); and this is why, you can understand, that the fire-engine department has been somewhat neglected, and its operation suspended at Volnoï-Voloschtchok. As for the state of decay into which the building, though barely two years old, is falling, that is easily accounted for. The villagers are stealing it piecemeal. They have already stolen the lower part of the staircase, and thereby have been too clever for themselves, as they cannot get at the balcony, which, being of real iron, must make their mouths water. The hinges were originally made of wood, together with all the clamps, and rivets, and bolts employed in the lower part of the structure, through a knowledge of the fact patent and notorious, that iron anywhere within his reach is as much too much for the frail morality of a Russian peasant as of a South Sea native. He will steal the iron tires off wheels; he will (and has frequently) stolen the chains of suspension-bridges. I don't think he would object to being loaded with chains, if he could steal and sell his fetters.

On domains like those of Prince Bouillabaissoff, the fire-engine and watch-tower organisation is not a weak-minded caricature, but an imposing reality. And the importance of such a preventive establishment can with difficulty be exaggerated. Of course, his dwelling being of wood, and easily ignitable, the Russian is incredibly careless with combustibles. It is one large tinderbox. This is why fire insurance companies do not flourish in Russia. It may certainly be asked what special reason the Russian has for adopting any precautions against conflagrations. Many reasons he certainly has not. He has about the same personal interest in his house as a pig might have in his stye. His breeder must give him four walls to live in, and a trough to eat his grains from,—but he may be driven to market any day—he may be Pork (and well-scored for the bakehouse) by next Wednesday week. Again his house is not unlike a spider's web—easily destroyed, easily reconstructed. The housemaid's broom, or the destroying element—it is all the same; a little saliva to the one, and a few logs to the other, and the spider and the moujik are at work again. You don't ask a baby to mend his cradle. When it is past service, papa goes out and buys him a new one. There is this paternal relation between the lord and the serf (besides the obvious non-rod-sparing to avoid the child-spoiling one) that the former is to a certain extent compelled to provide for the material wants of his big-bearded bantling. If Ivan's roof be burnt over his head, the lord must find him at least the materials for another habitation; if the harvests have fallen short, or an epizootis has decimated the country-side, he must feed them. The serf tills the ground for his lord, but he must have seeds given him to sow with. The Russian peasant having absolutely no earthly future to look forward to, it is but reasonable that his proprietor should supply the exigent demands of the present moment. There is no absolute right of existence guaranteed; but the master's natural interest in the Souls he possesses having means sufficient to keep their bodies alive withal, obviously prompts him to keep them fed, and housed, and clothed. There are his lands; when they have done their three days' work for him, they may raise enough corn in the next three days' serivat to make their black bread with. There are his hemp, and flax, and wool,—their women can spin, themselves can weave such hodden grey as they require to cover their nakedness. There are his secular woods; they may cut pine-logs there to make their huts. As regards the rigid necessary—the bare elements of food, covering, and shelter,—the nobility's serfs have decidedly the same advantage over the twenty millions or so, of crown slaves (facetiously termed free peasants) as Mr. Legree's negroes have over the free-born British paupers of Buckinghamshire, or Gloucestershire, or—out with it—St. James's, Westminster, and St. George's, Hanover Square. In a crown village, in a time of scarcity, the sufferings of the free peasants are almost incredibly horrible. Then the wretched

villagers, after having eaten their dogs, their cats, and the leather of their boots; after being seen scraping together handfuls of vermin to devour; after going out into the woods, and gnawing the bark off the trees; after swallowing clay and weeds to deceive their stomachs; after lying in wait, with agonised wistfulness for one solitary traveller to whom they can lift their hands to beg alms; after having undergone all this, they go out from their famine-stricken houses into the open fields and waste places, and those that are sickening build a kind of tilt awning-hut with bent twigs covered with rags, over those that are sick, and they rot first and die afterwards. In famines such as these, the people turn black, like negroes; whole families go naked; and though, poor wretches, they would steal the nails from horses' shoes, the crank and staple from a gibbet, or the trepanning from a man's skull, they refrain wondrously from cannibalism, from mutual violence, and from anything like organised depredations on the highway;—they fear the Czar and the police to the last gasp. Nor, do I conscientiously believe, if the richest shrines of the richest Sabors of all Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, and Novgorod—heavy with gold and silver, and blazing with costly jewels, were to be set up in the midst of their breadless, kopeckless, village, would they abstract one jewelled knob from the crozier of a saint, one tinselled ray from the aureole of the Panagia. At last, when many have died, and many more are dying, a stifled wail, which has penetrated with much difficulty through the official cotton-stuffed ears of district police auditoria, district chambers of domains, military chiefs of governments, and imperial chancelleries without number, comes soughing into the private cabinet of the Czar at the Winter Palace or Peterhoff. The Empress, good soul, sheds tears when she hears of the dreadful sufferings of the poor people so many hundred versts off. The imperial children I have no doubt wonder why, if the peasants have no bread to eat, they don't take to plum-cake; the emperor is affected, but goes to work; issues an ookase; certain sums from the imperial cassette are munificently affected to the relief of the most pressing necessities. Do you know, my reader, that long months elapse before the imperial alms reaches their wretched objects; do you know that the imperial bounty is bandied—all in strict accordance with official formality, of the like of which I have heard something nearer home—from department to department—from hand to hand; and that to each set of greasy fingers, belonging to scoundrels in gold lace, and rogues with stars and crosses, and knaves of hereditary nobility, there sticks a certain per-centage on the sum originally allocated. The Czar gives, and gives generously. The Tchinn lick, and mumble, and paw the precious dole, and when, at last, it reaches its rightful recipients it is reduced to a hundredth of its size. Do you know one of the chief proverbs appertaining and peculiar to Russian serfdom: it is this—"Heaven is too high, the Czar is too far off." To whom are the miserable creatures to cry? To Mumbo-Jumbovitch their priest, who is an ignorant and deboshed dolt, generally fuddled with kvass, who will tell them to kiss St. Nicholas's great toe? To the nearest police-mayor, who will give them fifty blows with a stick, if they are troublesome, and send them about their business? To the Czar, who is so far off, morally and physically? To Heaven? Such famines as these have been in crown-villages, on the great chaussée road from Petersburg to Moscow. Such famines have been, to our shame be it said, in our own free, enlightened, and prosperous United Kingdom, within these dozen years. But I am not ashamed — no, pot-and-kettle philosophers, sympathisers with the oppressed Hindoo—no, mote-and-beam logicians full of condolence with the enslaved Irishman — I am not ashamed to talk of famines in Russia, because there have been famines in Skibbereen, and Orkney, and Shetland. The famine-stricken people may have been neglected, oppressed, wronged, by stupid and wicked rulers; but I am not ashamed—I am rather proud to remember the burst of sympathy elicited from the breasts of millions among us, at the first recital of the sufferings of their brethren—the strenuous exertions made by citizens of every class and every creed to raise and send immediate succour to those who were in want. We commit great errors as a nation, but we repair them nobly; and I think we ought no more to wince at being reminded of our former backslidings, or refrain from denouncing and redressing wrongs wherever they exist, because, in the old time, we have done wrongfully ourselves—than we ought to go in sackcloth in ashes, because Richard the Third murdered his nephews, or abstain from the repression of cannibalism in New Zealand, because our Druidical ancestors burnt human beings alive in wicker cages.*

MONSTERS.

WITHOUT accusing Nature of ever being unmindful of a purpose, I think I may be allowed to say that she sometimes indulges in vagaries, the motive for which it is not always very easy to comprehend. Her creations are occasionally so strange, that one is compelled now and then to inquire the object

* The impressions hereabove set down respecting famine, and, indeed, most of the information on the subject of the condition of the Russian peasantry which may hereafter be found in these pages, are derived, not from official documents, not even from the trustworthy pages of M. de Haxthausen, who, though professedly favourable to the Russian government, and painting, as far as he can, couleur de rose, lets out some very ugly truths occasionally; but from repeated conversations I have held with Russian gentlemen, some high in office in ministerial departments, some men of scientific attainments, some university students, some military officers. All the facts

of them: and it will also happen that one has frequently some time to wait before a perfectly satisfactory answer can be obtained. I do not ask why the Scolopendræ cannot do without their hundred legs; why the Chirotes, those very small Saurians, indulge in such an extravagant length of tail; why the family of the Auks are so fond of sitting in rows like nine-pins, with little wings apparently of not the slightest use; why certain pachydermatous animals have their faces disfigured by warts. These, and a thousand similar questions, I do not ask, because I know that Professor Owen could at once tell me the reason why. But there are questions which I often have a strong inclination to put, touching more than one lusus naturæ; instigated to do so, without doubt, by the conviction that nobody—not even the distinguished naturalist whom I have just named—can afford me the information I profess to require.

The present queries refer chiefly to the class familiarly called monsters; not those in human shape, who figure so conspicuously in police reports,—but the bonâ-fide prodigies about whom there can be no mistake: monsters that don't beat their wives, or eat live cats for wagers; but creatures "deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before" (or out of) "their time;" who have no conceivable mission to accomplish, and who only seem to have been expressly created to make the universe "stare and gasp." Such sportive productions generally find their way now-a-days into the booths of wandering showmen; but there was a time when they were of far higher account; when learned men chronicled their acts, and their appearance was supposed to have an influence—generally unpleasant—on the destinies of nations or their rulers.

I must preface such an account as I mean to give of the monsters about which I have lately been reading, by saying that I quite rely upon the authorities I quote from; that is to say, I believe that they believed all they asserted; and where so much belief is involved, it is rather an invidious task to attempt to set everybody right. My doubting, therefore, will be done, like Ariel's spiriting, gently. As the French say, Entrons en matière—let us begin.

In the Traditions Tératologiques of Monsieur Berger de Xivrey (Paris, eighteen hundred and thirty-six), a commentary is given on the text of a Latin manuscript of the tenth century, intituled by him, De Monstris et Belluis (Of Monsters and Great Beasts), which belonged to the Marquis of Rosanbo. This work, which owes its origin to the eighth chapter of the sixteenth book of The City of God, by Saint Augustine, is supplemental to the Fables of Phædrus, which occupies the first portion of the manuscript. From this part of the volume compiled by Monsieur Berger de Xivrey, I take some of the following descriptions.

Under the head of Cynocephali (Dog-headed), is this (translated) passage: "Cynocephali are also said to be produced in India, which have the heads of dogs, and every word which they utter they corrupt by barking. And these people imitate beasts rather than men, by eating their meat raw." The most detailed account of "these people" is given by Ctesias, the Greek physician, who, in his History of India, says: "In these mountains it is said there are men who have the heads of dogs, and whose garments are made of the skins of wild beasts. They have no language, but they bark like dogs, and understand each other. Their teeth are longer than those of dogs; their nails resemble the nails of those animals, but they are longer and rounder. They inhabit the mountains as far as the river Indus. They are black, and very just" (in their dealings) "like the Indians, with whom they trade." (A curious sensation it must excite, the appearance of a dog-headed customer!) "They comprehend what the latter say to them, but they can only reply by barking, and by signs which they make with their hands and fingers, like the deaf and dumb. They feed upon raw flesh. The Indians call them Calystrians, which signifies in Greek, Cynocephales." Ælian makes some additions to this account. He tells us that the Calystrians "eat the flesh of wild animals, which they easily capture because they are very light of foot. When they have taken their prey, they kill it, cut it up in pieces, and roast it, not with fire, but in the sun" (rather a hot sun). "They have flocks of sheep and goats, and drink their milk" (lapping it, probably, after the fashion of other dog-headed animals).

The Imperial Library in Paris possesses a manuscript copy of a poem by Manuel Philæus, bearing the same title as Ælian's work, περὶ ζώων ἰδιότητος (On the Peculiarities of Animals), in which a Cynocephalus, very carefully drawn and coloured, is represented like a man hairy all over, except his hands, feet, elbows, knees, and head. The latter resembles that of a setter, and the nails of the feet are elongated like veritable talons. The figure is upright and well-proportioned; in the left hand he carries a hare by the hind-legs, and in his right the stick with which he knocks down his game.

Respecting these Cynocephali, Sir John Maundevile, the celebrated traveller, who always swallows Pliny's lies with infinite relish, discourses as follows: "In an island clept Nacemara, alle the men and women have houndes' hedes; and they were clept Cynocephali; and they were full resonable,

I have rested my remarks upon have been told me with a calm complacently indifferent air, over tumblers of tea, and paper cigarettes, and usually accompanied by a remark of c'est comme ça. And I think I kept my eyes sufficiently wide open during my stay, and was pretty well able to judge when my interlocutors were lying, and when they were telling the truth.

and of gode undirstondynge, saf that thei worschipen an ox for here" (their) "God. And also everyche of hem" (them) "werethe an ox of gold or of sylver in his forhed, in tokene that they loven well here God. * * Thei ben grete folk and wel fyghtynge; and they have a gret Targe, that covereth all the body, and a spere in here hond to fighte with. And zif thei taken ony man in battayle, anon thei eten him."

Somewhat akin to these dog-headed gentlemen, though with more of humanity in their countenances, are the people of whom Sir John also speaks when describing the empire of Prester John. "In that Desert," he says, "were many wylde men, that were hidouse to looken on; for thei were horned; and they speken nought, but they gronten, as Pigges."

Writers on natural history in former days did not draw such nice distinctions as science now requires; and, therefore, it is not surprising to find the attributes of various families of the Simian race united under one, the Cynocephalus doing duty as well for the true baboon as for the African and Oriental varieties of the Chimpanzee, or Troglodytes Niger. Of the habits of these quadrumana, when tamed, enough has been recorded: how they sit at table, eat and drink (as people say) "like Christians," and exhibit other accomplishments, more or less polite; but it is their savage state which more closely allies them to monsters. Think of the Pongo, a dog-headed party, which in its native African forests attains the stature of a giant, and goes about with a tremendous club in his hand, knocking down elephants (so Battel says)—a fellow whom you can't manage to capture alive, since he has the strength and agility of ten ordinary men! Spring-heeled Jack, the British monster of his day, was nothing to this Pongo of Sierra Leone, who, according to Purchas, is stout enough to turn the scale against two men of common size. "On the shores of the river Gambia," says Frazer (cited by Buffon), "the Pongos are larger and fiercer than in any other part of Africa; the negroes are greatly afraid of them, and dare not go into the woods for fear of being attacked by these animals (who invite them to a kind of duel, offering them the choice of sticks to fight with)!"

These creatures are held—and very justly held—to be extremely maleficent, but in the parts of Nubia between the White and Blue Niles, they bear an entirely opposite character, if we are to credit the statement of Abdallah ben Ahmed ben Solaïm, an Arabic author, a native of the city of Assouan, who endows them with the properties of genii. "In the district between the two rivers there dwells a people called Kersa, occupying a spacious territory fertilised by the waters of the Nile In seed-time, each inhabitant brings all the grain he has, and traces an outline proportioned to the quantity he has to sow. Having thrown a little of the grain into the four corners of the marked enclosure, he places the rest in the middle with a vessel of beer, and then withdraws; returning the next day, he finds the beer gone and the seed sown. In like manner, at the season of harvest, the farmer (who must be a very lazy fellow) takes a few ears of wheat, and places them, with the beer, in a convenient spot, and next day discovers that his corn is all cut and placed in shocks. The same method is employed in winnowing the grain, but if weeding his field a blade of wheat is accidentally included, the whole of the corn is torn up in the course of the night." This beer-drinking African brownie is conjectured by Monsieur Étienne Quatremère, who tells the story, and does not doubt it, to be only a very intelligent monkey!

Egypt is the habitat of the Troglodytes, or dwellers in caves, of Sir John Maundevile; but they differ, in the article of diet at least, from the Trogs of the Arabian historian, though our own famed traveller has no suspicion that they can be other than men. "Thei eten," he says, "flesche of serpentes; and thei eten but litille, and thei speken nought; but thei hissen as serpentes don." With regard to the barking propensities of the Cynocephali, we learn from Allamand that a certain Mr. Harwood possessed a female orang-outang, given him by the King of Ashantee, "which pronounced frequently and successively the syllables yaa-hou, accenting and dwelling very forcibly on the last."

The writers whose forte was the prodigious, did not confine themselves to the enumeration of accidental monstrosities. It was not sufficient for them to meet with an occasional lusus naturæ; they dealt in such commodities wholesale. Thus, on certain eastern shores, the whereabouts of which is unfortunately not specified, "dwelt a race of men fifteen feet high, whose ears were so enormous, that when they lay down at night they wrapped themselves completely up in them." The narrator of this marvel adds "that when they encountered strangers they fled rapidly away through the desert, with their wonderful ears erect." Sir John Maundevile matches these large-eared people in the following passage: "And in another Yle ben folk of foul fasceon and schapp, that have the lippe above the mouthe so gret, that when thei slepen in the sonne, thei keveren all the face with that lippe."

The Sciapodes, or umbrella-legged, were a people of Africa (or India) according to Pliny, Solinus, Saint Augustine, Isidore of Seville, and others, who, to shelter themselves from the burning rays of a too tropical sun, lay on their backs, and holding up their leg (they have but one), make it serve the purpose of a large parasol. They are described as being very swift of foot (sunt celerrimæ naturæ), though how they get over the ground

with their solitary leg is not stated. Sir John the Traveller says: "In that contree ben folk, that han but a foot; and thei gon so fast, that it is marvaylle; and the foot is so large, that it shadoweth all the body agen the sonne whanne thei woll lye and reste hem."

As surprising, in their way, as the Sciapodes, were the Acephali, or headless men (there are a good many of them in office at the present time), dwellers on the Brixontes, a tributary of the Nile, whose additional peculiarity was that of having their eye or eyes (usually it was but one) in the shoulder, breast, or stomach. Conrad Wolffahrt, a learned Alsatian philologist, who Hellenised his name into Lycosthenis, published a volume of Prodigiorum (Basel, 1557), in which are depicted the portraits of all the monsters which ever did exist or could be supposed to have existed. The headless, double-headed, one-eyed, many-eyed, four-legged, no-legged, double-bodied, horse-faced, pig-faced, bird-faced—every variety of monstrosity, in short, which it is possible to imagine—find a place in this recondite work. I will describe a few from the engravings, taken at random. At page six hundred and sixty-eight, is a kind of centaur, the upper part of whose body is that of a man, the lower that of a horse, but without a tail; he has two pairs of arms, the superior pair terminating in webbed claws, the lower in human fingers; he has a moustache and biforked beard, the ears of a horse, a good crop of well-dressed hair, and his countenance has a mild and rather agreeable expression, which bears out the statement in the text that he is friendly to man (amici sunt hominum et mulierum). At page six hundred and sixty-seven is a Tartarian monster, who for the convenience of wearing the neck and head of a dragon, has placed his own human face in the very middle of his body, and to assist his motion, has added a pair of wings, which grow out of his hips; in all other respects this Tartar (who is not often caught) resembles a naked man. He is said to be most ferocious and inimical to the human race (animalia sunt ferocissima, et hominibus inimicissima), and he looks it. At page six hundred and sixty-five is a naked gentleman with a cat's head, said to have been born at Basle; at page six hundred and fifty-six, another with the legs and curly tail of a Newfoundland dog, a native of Cleisdorff, in Germany. At page six hundred and forty-two is a monster whose two hind-legs are equine, with solid hoofs; his near foreleg is only a stump, which he brandishes in the air as if he had just escaped from a trap, and his off foreleg is the foot of a human being; his tail is very like the Prince of Wales's feathers; his mane is plaited, his ears droop, his eye is perfectly round, and his lips are hippopotamian. Job Fincel, who stands godfather to the greater part of these wonderful creatures, assigns a town in Pomerania as the locality of this individual. At page six hundred and forty, the author represents a domestic cat of his own, two of whose legs curl round and round like tails, while the tail itself is convoluted like an ingenious piece of fireworks. Caspar Peucerus is the authority, at page six hundred and thirty-three, for an animal of a monstrous and horrible form (aspectu tetro et horrido) whose right-arm stands out stiff from the place where its right ear ought to be, while the left arm grows from the hip; the feet terminate in scaly claws. At page six hundred, is a very unfortunate-looking monster with only one leg and no arms at all; it somehow contrives to stand upright, and there it remains fixed, like a milestone. At page five hundred and ninety-six, sits an elderly-looking personage, whose intellectual forehead is twice as high as the rest of his face, and whose legs, reversing the usual order, are twisted upwards, so that his feet rise above his shoulders, one of them tucked under his arm, the other sustained in front. The bowel department of this gentleman is fully developed like the mechanism of an open clock, but he appears tolerably comfortable notwithstanding. Not to cumber these columns with too many monstrosities, I shall only describe one more. This is a web-footed and web-handed character of noble parentage (natus est ex honestis et nobilibus parentibus) out of the corners of whose eyes flames seem to dart, and whose nose takes the shape of a long, curved horn; a forked tail is amongst its appendages, but the most remarkable parts of its conformation are six dogs' heads, which severally ornament the knees, the bend of the arms, and the armpits. An extra pair of eyes is set in the middle of the stomach.

For the rest, there are animals which have two bodies and only one head between them; others that indulge in a multiplicity of arms and legs; parties with horns growing in impossible places, and tails that issue from their eyes, ears, and elbows; some of them very fierce-looking, some exceedingly gentle, and all of them excessively ridiculous. One thing is observable in the collection; each engraving does duty a dozen times over,—whether the original flourished in the time of the Roman Maxentius or the German Maximilian.

That there were once black monsters not less than two-and-twenty feet high ("duodeviginti pedes altitudinis capiunt," says the Rosanbonian manuscript), the very delectable romance of the noble and valiant King, Alexander the Great, informs us in the following words: "Alexander entering the country towards the east, found there people of horrible aspect—full of all manner of evil ways—who ate all kinds of meat and flesh of man when they could get it. The king having considered their bad customs, and thinking that if they multiplied through the world,

people would be misled by their pernicious example, caused them to be assembled, together with their wives and children, and took them out of the east and sent them to the northern parts between two mountains. He then prayed to our Lord" (like a good Christian, as Alexander the Great—Great Ammon's son—undoubtedly was), "to make these mountains draw close together, till they stood at only twelve feet from each other. Then" (this prayer being immediately attended to) "Alexander caused gates of iron to be made and covered with asbestos, so that no fire might injure or destroy them. And from that day forward none of these men ever came out of the place wherein he had put them (which is the reason why we never see negroes now-a-days two-and-twenty feet high)."

Of course Maundevile does not leave giants out of his collection, for though he admits that he never saw any, "because that no man comethe to that Yle but zif he be devoured anon," he says that "men have seyn many thymes tho geauntes (who are described as 'fifty Fote long') taken men in the See out of hire Scippes, and broug hte hem to lond, two in one hond and two in another, etynge hem goynge, all rawe and alle quyk."

Split men are a variety of the human race only met with now-a-days, in a metaphorical sense, at elections, but Bochart tells us, that in some of the marshy districts of Arabia (a country, by the bye, not over famous for marshes) creatures exist formed like the half of a man split down the middle from head to foot (like a kippered salmon) having only one eye, one arm, one leg, &c. The Arabic name for these beings is Nésnás. Mr. Lane, in his Notes to the Arabian Nights (vol. i. p. 37) speaks of this monster, whom he classes, however, amongst the Jinn or Genii, as being found in the woods of El-Yemen, and being endowed with speech. He adds, "It is said that it is found in Hadramót as well as El-Yemen; and that one was brought alive to El-Mutawekkil. It resembled a man in form, except that it had but half a face, which was in its breast, and a tail like that of a sheep. The people of Hadramót, it is added, eat it; and its flesh is sweet. It is only generated in their country. A man who went there asserted that he saw a captured Nésnás, which cried out for mercy, conjuring him by God and himself." For the benefit of those who desire to see what the Nésnás is like, I may mention that there is a drawing of one in the Bodleian Library.

What were termed double and triple-formed men (Genus formæ duplicis et triplicis) abounded in the olden time. They combined the shapes of man and beast, or of a terrestrial and a marine animal. The Arabian author Alkazuin, in a treatise on the Prodigies of Creation, mentions a sea-born creature with a human face, to which he gives the irreverent name of "Old Jew." He describes this individual (one is tempted to think of a Hebrew dealer in marine stores) as having a white beard, the hide of an ox, and being the size of a calf. He comes out of the sea on a Friday, and wanders about till sunset, "leaping like a frog," and then sinks into his native element, following the track of vessels.

To a variety of this species, Alkazuin affixes a tail, and tells a humorous but not very delicate story about them. Another Arabian writer, cited by Bochart, speaks of "aquatic females," who, in some respects, differ little from certain of the sex seen at Ramsgate and Margate during the bathing-season. "Their colour," he says, "is high; they perfectly resemble women,—have long, flowing hair and charming eyes, full of sprightliness. They speak an unintelligible language, interrupted with immoderate bursts of laughter."

Although it may not be flattering to the Nereids and Tritons of antiquity, I suspect that our friends the Phocidæ, whose countenances closely resemble those of men (Scotchmen in particular), have in a great degree to answer for the descriptions given of those marine deities. If not, they must be content, in spite of their celestial lineage, to be classed amongst monsters. Hear how Pliny discourses of them: "In the time when Tiberius was Emperour, there came unto him an ambassadour from Ulyssipon, sent of purpose to make a relation that upon their sea-coast there was discovered, within a certain hole, a sea-goblin, called Triton, sounding a shell like a trumpet or cornet, and that he was in form and shape like those that are commonly painted for Tritons. And as for the Mermaids, called Nereides, it is no fabulous tale that goeth of them; for look how painters draw them, so they are indeed; only their bodie is rough and skaled all over. . . . For such a meremaid was seene, and beheld plainly upon the same coast, neere to the shore; and the inhabitants dwelling neer heard it a farre off, when it was a dying, to make pitteous mone, and chattering very heavily. . . . Divers knights of Rome testify also to having seen a merman, in every respect resembling a man as perfectly in all parts of the bodie as might be. . . . And they report, moreover, that in the night season he would come out of the sea aboard their ships; but look, upon what part soever he settled, he waied the same downe; and if he rested and continued there any long time, he would sinke it cleane." John Theodore Jablonsky gives a more particular account than Pliny of this aquatic class (Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, page six hundred and fifty-eight): "Meer-man, Meerweib, Meer-minne—that is, Sea-man, Mermaid, or Siren; called by the Indians Ambitiangulo, otherwise Pesiengono, and by the Portuguese Pezz-muger—is found in the seas and in some rivers in the southern parts of Africa and India, and in the Philippine and

Molucca islands, Brazil, North America and Europe, in the North Sea. Its length is eight spans, its head is oval, and the face resembles that of a man. It has an high forehead, little eyes, a flat nose, and large mouth, but has no chin, or ears. It has two arms, which are short, but without joints or elbows (like the late Miss Biffin), with hands or paws, to each of which there are four long fingers, which are not very flexible (unlike Miss B.) connected to each other by a membrane like that of the foot of a goose. . . . . Their skin is of a brownish-grey colour, and their intestines are like those of a hog. Their flesh is as fat as pork, particularly the upper part of their bodies; and this is a favourite dish with the Indians, broiled upon a gridiron. (Fancy ordering a broiled mermaid at Blackwall!) It makes a lamentable cry when drawn out of the water (no wonder, with the gridiron so extremely handy)."

Making mermaids a substitute for pork seems common in Africa, for Edward Dapper, in his description of that continent (page five hundred and eighty-four), informs us that—"In the sea of Angola, mermaids are frequently catch'd which resemble the human species. They are taken in nets and killed by the negroes, and are heard to shriek and cry like women. The inhabitants on that coast eat their flesh, being very fond of it, which they say is much like pork in taste. The ribs of those animals are reckoned a good styptic." (Too much of a styptic to have a mermaid for a rib.) Of the merman genus is also the animal called the Monk-fish. Caspar Peucerus vouches for having seen two of these creatures, "with a human face and a tonsure round his head"—on the first occasion, in fifteen hundred and forty-nine, in the Baltic Sea, not far from Haffnia, and in the following year near Copenhagen.

Father Francis de Pavia says (in the relation of Captain Uring; London, seventeen hundred and twenty-seven), that "throughout all the rivers of Zair the mermaid is found, which from the middle upwards has some resemblance of a woman: it has breasts, nipples, hands, and arms, but downwards it is altogether fish; its head is round, and the face like that of a calf; a large ugly mouth, little ears, and round full eyes; that he has eat of them divers times, and it tastes not unlike swine's flesh, and the entrails resemble that of a hog, for which reason the natives name it Ngullin-a-masa (the water-sow); but the Portuguese call it Peixe Molker (the woman-fish). Although it feeds on herbs which grow on the river side, yet it does not go out of the water, but only holds its head out when it feeds: they are taken for the most part in the rainy times, when the waters are disturbed and muddy, and they cannot discern the approach of fishermen; they are caught by striking."

The pretended letter of Alexander the Great to his mother Olympias and his preceptor Aristotle, found in the Latin version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, and from which Vincent de Beauvais extracted so much in the fourth book of his Speculum Historiale, is a complete repertory of monsters. According to this work, which was the delight of the middle ages, they beset the path of the Macedonian hero at every step of his progress through India. Alexander begins the list of his prodigies with an account of a famous crab: "We continued our march until we came to the sea-shore, where, having halted, we saw a crab come out of the briny flood and seize the dead body of a horse, which it carried off. Shortly afterwards, a host of these marine monsters fell upon us, so that we were not able to capture a single crab. The flame of a fire which we lit delivered us from them." This, it must be confessed, was not a very glorious passage-of-arms for the conqueror of the world. The royal Greek continues: "Quitting these places, we moved on for several days, and encountered men who had six feet and three eyes; a little further on we met with dog-headed men, whom we had some difficulty in putting to flight. At last we reached an immense plain, in the midst of which was a great gulf; I threw a bridge across it, and all the army passed over. Thenceforward we were deprived of the light of day, but, continuing the march, we arrived at the land of darkness, where The Happy dwell. Here two birds with human faces" (How did he make them out?) "approached me on the wing, saying, 'It is not permitted to thee, O Alexander, to venture further.'" At this announcement the king retraced his steps, and proceeded in a different direction. The conquest of Persia followed, after which Alexander, taking a number of guides, turned towards the north.

"On the ninth day we found ourselves in a forest, called Anaphantus, full of a great number of trees bearing fruit like apples. There were also in this forest men of vast stature, twenty-four cubits in height, with thick necks and hands, and elbows like saws" (a nudge from these giants would be unpleasant). "They advanced upon us. I was very much afflicted at seeing such beings, and ordered that some of them should be seized. We charged them with cries and trumpet-blasts, and they fled from us. I killed three hundred and thirty-two of them" (a statement one may be permitted to doubt), "and lost a hundred and sixty of my own soldiers."

The next foes whom the Greeks encountered were the inhabitants of a country smiling with verdure, of gigantic size, stout, hairy, and red, with eyes like those of lions. "There were others also, called Ochlotes, without hair, four cubits high, and as broad as the length of a lance; they wore aprons for their only attire. They were very strong, and well disposed to annoy us, but fought only with clubs, killing many of my men.

When I perceived this, I caused a great fire to be lit" (as in the battle of the crabs), "and thus we obliged them to retreat. . . . . On the following day we went to see the caverns where they dwelt, and found wild beasts chained at the entrances, as high as those dogs which we call Dandex, but four cubits long, and having each three eyes."

The Melophagi—men bristled like pigs—were Alexander's next opponents. One of these rough-skins was taken prisoner, and, being brought before Alexander, looked at him very impudently; and when the soldiers sought to seize him, he uttered a guttural noise, on which about ten thousand of his companions started out of a marsh. Alexander, however, set the reeds on fire, and they fled, leaving about four hundred prisoners, who, refusing all nourishment, soon died; "they did not speak, but barked like dogs."

Alexander's next adventure was with invisible foes—like the Hátif one of the Arabian Jinns, being heard, not seen. "We arrived at the bank of a river on which were trees which rose from the ground on the appearance of the sun, and continued to grow till the sixth hour. At the seventh hour they continued to decrease till they almost disappeared in the ground. Tears dropped from their branches, like those distilled by a weeping fig, of the sweetest and most exquisite odour. I ordered that these trees should be cut, and the tears gathered with sponges. Those who attempted to execute this command were immediately scourged by invisible genii. We could hear the noise of their whips, and saw the marks on the men's backs, but could not see those who struck. Then a voice addressed me, saying, 'Neither cut nor gather anything. If you do not cease, the whole army will be struck dumb.' Full of terror, I instantly put a stop to our proceedings. In the river I have spoken of were black stones, whose property was to communicate their colour to all who touched them. There were also a great number of water-snakes, and many kinds of fish, which could not be drest with fire, but only cold spring-water. A soldier having caught one of these fish, wanted to wash it, and then putting it into some salt, left it there; when he returned, it was done" (and so, perhaps, was the soldier). "On the banks of this river were also birds similar to some we have in Greece; but if anyone ate of them fire issued straightway from his body." Some six-eyed beasts, like wild asses, only twenty cubits long, offered the army no molestation; they had one peculiarity, four out of the six eyes were useless, as they could only see with two.

Headless men with human voices (like Caliban and Trinculo) were next met with; they were covered with hair, lived upon fish, and were, to a certain extent, polite, offering Alexander truffles, weighing twenty-five pounds each, which they dug up for him.

At the next place they came to, which was on the coast, they heard human voices speaking Greek, but could not discern the speakers. "Some soldiers unfortunately thought of swimming here; but great crabs seized them and dragged them to the bottom, and we all hastily made for the shore, terror-stricken."

At a stream which they soon afterwards reached, Alexander being hungry, desired his cook to get him something to eat. He took a shell-fish and dipped it into the fountain, to wash it; and as soon as it touched the water it came to life again, and swam away. The cook did not mention this fact till some time afterwards, when Alexander punished him, vexed, without doubt, at having lost his dinner.

At last Alexander's wanderings in the land of wonders came to an end. Two more birds appeared, "which had nothing particular about them, except the eyes of men!" They, also, spoke Greek; the first crying out, "What soil dost thou trample on, O Alexander? That which belongs to God only. Return, wretch, and dare not to approach the land of the Happy! Return, mortal; tread on the earth that is given to thee, and prepare not punishment for thyself and thy companions." The second bird added: "The East calls thee, and victory submits to thy power the kingdom of Porus." Hereupon the birds flew away, and Alexander went to the right-about, ordering the conductors of the she-asses to lead the way. "After journeying for twenty-two days by the light of the stars, the soldiers heard the voices of the young asses answering their dams, and the army emerged once more into daylight. It was of use, for the men had laden themselves in the dark with many objects which, on examination, they now found to be fine gold." Here ends the letter, and with it my dissertation on Monsters.

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BOLD WORDS BY A BACHELOR.

THE postman's knocks at my door have been latterly more frequent than usual; and out of the increased number of letters left for me, it has happened that an unusually large proportion have contained wedding cards. Just as there seem to be certain days when all the beautiful women in London take to going out together, certain days when all the people we know appear to be conspiring to meet us at every turn in one afternoon's walk—so there seem to be times and seasons when all our friends are inexplicably bent on getting married together. Capricious in everything, the law of chances is especially whimsical, according to my experience, in its influence over the solemnisation of matrimony. Six months ago, there was no need for me to leave a single complimentary card anywhere, for weeks and weeks together. Just at the present time, I find myself perpetually wasting my money in cab-hire, and wearing out my card-case by incessant use. My friends are marrying recklessly in all sorts of opposite directions, and are making the bells a greater nuisance than usual in every parish of London.

These curious circumstances have set me thinking on the subject of marriage, and have recalled to my mind certain reflections in connection with that important change in life, which I first made when I was not quite such an incurably-settled old bachelor as I am at the present moment. It occurred to me, at that past time, and it occurs to me still, that, while great stress is laid in ordinary books and ordinary talk on the personal interest which a man has himself, and on the family interest which his near relations have also, in his marrying an affectionate and sensible woman, sufficient importance has not been attached to the interest of another sort, which the tried and worthy friends of his bachelor days ought to feel, and, for the most part, do feel, in his getting a good wife. It really and truly depends upon her, in more cases than I should like to enumerate, whether her husband's friendships are to be continued, after his marriage, in all their integrity, or are only to be maintained as a mere social form. It is hardly necessary for me to repeat—but I will do so, in order to avoid the slightest chance of misconstruction—that I am here speaking only of the worthiest, the truest, the longest-tried friends of a man's bachelor days. Towards these every sensible married woman feels, as I believe, that she owes a duty for her husband's sake. But, unfortunately, there are such female phenomena in the world as fond wives and devoted mothers, who are anything rather than sensible women the moment they are required to step out of the sphere of their conjugal and maternal instincts. Women of this sort have an unreasonable jealousy of their husbands in small things: and on the misuse of their influence to serve the interests of that jealousy, lies but too often the responsibility of severing such friendships as no man can hope to form for the second time in the course of his life. By the severing of friendships, I do not mean the breaking off of all intercourse, but the fatal changing of the terms on which a man lives with his friend—the casting of the first slight shadow which alters the look of the whole prospect. It is astonishing by what a multitude of slight threads the firm continuity of brotherly regard is maintained. Many a woman has snapped asunder all the finer ligaments which once connected her husband and his friend; and has thought it enough if she left the two still attached by the coarser ties which are at the common disposal of all the world. Many a woman—delicate, affectionate, and kind within her own narrow limits—has committed that heavy social offence, and has never felt afterwards a single pang of pity or remorse.

These bold words will be unpopular enough, I am afraid, with certain readers; but I am an old bachelor, and I must have licence to speak the crabbed truth. I respect and admire a good husband and father, but I cannot shake off the equally sincere reverence that I feel for a good friend; and I must be allowed to tell some married ladies—what Society ought to tell them a little oftener—that there are other affections, in this world, which are noble and honourable, besides those of conjugal and parental origin. It may be an assertion of a very shocking and unexpected kind, but I must nevertheless be excused for saying, that some of the best wives and mothers in the land have given the heart-ache to some of the best friends.

While they have been behaving like patterns of conjugal propriety, they have been estranging men who would once have gone to the world's end to serve each other. I, as a single man, can say nothing of the dreadful wrench—not the less dreadful because it is inevitable—when a father and mother lose a daughter, in order that a lover may gain a wife. But I can speak feelingly of the shock of losing a dear friend, in order that a bride may gain a devoted husband. Nothing shall ever persuade me (possibly because I am not married) that there is not a flaw of some sort in the love for a wife which is made complete, in some people's eyes, by forced contributions from the love which belongs to a friend. I know that a man and woman who make a happy marriage have gained the summit of earthly felicity; but do they never reach that enviable eminence without having trampled underfoot something venerable, or something tender by the way?

Bear with me, indignant wives—bear with me, if I recal the long-past time when one of the handsomest women I ever saw, took my dearest friend away from me, and destroyed, in one short day, the whole pleasant edifice that we two had been building up together since we were boys at school. I shall never be as fond of any human being again, as I was of that one friend, and, until the beautiful woman came between us, I believe there was nothing in this world that he would not have sacrificed and have done for me. Even while he was courting, I kept my hold on him. Against opposition on the part of his bride and her family, he stipulated bravely that I should be his best man on the wedding-day. The beautiful woman grudged me my one small corner in his heart, even at that time; but he was true to me—he persisted—and I was the first to shake hands with him when he was a married man. I had no suspicion then that I was to lose him from that moment. I only discovered the truth when I went to pay my first visit to the bride and bridegroom at their abode in the country. I found a beautiful house, exquisitely kept from top to bottom; I found a hearty welcome; I found a good dinner and an airy bedroom; I found a pattern husband and a pattern wife: the one thing I did not find was my old friend. Something stood up in his clothes, shook hands with me, pressed wine on me, called me by my Christian name, and inquired what I was doing in my profession. It was certainly something that had a trick of looking like my former comrade and brother; something that nobody in my situation could have complained of with the smallest reason; something with all the brightness of the old metal about it, but without the sterling old ring; something, in short, which made me instinctively take my chamber-candlestick early on the first night of my arrival, and say good night while the beautiful woman and pattern wife was present to keep her eye on me. Can I ever forget the language of that eye on that occasion!—the volumes it spoke in one glance of cruel triumph! "No more sacred secrets between you two," it said, brightly. "When you trust him now, you must trust me. You may sacrifice yourself for your love of him over and over again still, but he shall make no sacrifices now for you, until he has first found out how they affect my convenience and my pleasure. Your place in his heart now, is where I choose it to be. I have stormed the citadel, and I will bring children by-and-by to keep the ramparts; and you, the faithful old soldier of former years—you have got your discharge, and may sit and sun yourself as well as you can at the outer gates. You have been his truest friend, but he has another now, and need trouble you no longer, except in the capacity of witness of his happiness. This, you will observe, is in the order of nature, and in the recognised fitness of things; and he hopes you will see it—and so do I. And he trusts you will sleep well under his (and my) new roof—and so do I. And he wishes you good night—and so do I!"

Many, many years have passed since I first learned these hard truths; but I can never forget the pang that it cost me to get them by heart at a moment's notice. My old friend lives still—that is to say, I have an intimate acquaintance, who asks me to all his dinners, and who made me godfather to one of his children; but the brother of my love, who died to me on the day when I paid him the marriage visit, has never come back to life since that time. On the altar at which we two once sacrificed, the ashes lie cold. A model husband and father has risen from them, and that result is, I suppose, the only one that any third person has a right to expect. It may be so; but, to this day, I cannot help thinking that the beautiful woman would have done better if she could have made a fond husband without at the same time marring a good friend.

Readers will, I am afraid, not be wanting, who will be inclined to tell me that the lady to whom I have been referring, only asserted the fair privilege that was hers by right of marriage; and that my sense of injury springs from the unjustifiable caprice and touchy selfishness of an old bachelor. Without attempting to defend myself, I may at least be allowed to inquire into the lady's motive for using her privilege—or, in plainer terms, for altering the relations in which my friend and I had stood towards one another since boyhood. Her idea, I presume to have been, that, if I preserved my old footing with her husband, I should be taking away some part of his affection that belonged to her. According to my idea of it, she was taking away something which had belonged to me, and which no effort on her part could afterwards convert to her own use. It is hard to make

some women understand that a husband's heart—let him be ever so devoted and affectionate—has vacant places in it which they can never hope to fill. It is a house in which they and their children, naturally and properly, occupy all the largest apartments and supply all the prettiest furniture; but there are spare rooms which they cannot enter, which are reserved all through the lease of life for inevitable guests of some sort from the world outside. It is better to let in the old friend than some of the substituted visitors, who are sure, sooner or later, to enter where there are rooms ready for them, by means of pass-keys obtained without the permission of the permanent tenants. Am I wrong in making such assertions as these? I should be willing enough to think it probable—being only a bachelor—if my views were based on mere theory. But my opinions, such as they are, have been formed with the help of proofs and facts. I have met with bright examples of wives who have strengthened their husbands' friendships as they never could have been strengthened except under the influence of a woman's care, employed in the truest, the tenderest, the most delicate way. I have seen men rescued from the bad habits of half a lifetime by the luck of keeping faithful friends who were the husbands of sensible wives. It is a very trite and true remark that the deadliest enmities between men have been occasioned by women. It is not less certain—though it is a far less widely-accepted truth—that some (I wish I could say many) of the strongest friendships have been knit most closely by women's helping hands.

The real fact seems to be, that the general idea of the scope and purpose of the Institution of Marriage is a miserably narrow one. The same senseless prejudice which leads some people, when driven to extremes, to the practical confession (though it may not be made in plain words) that they would rather see murder committed under their own eyes than approve of any project for obtaining a law of divorce which shall be equal in its operation on husbands and wives of all ranks, who can not live together, is answerable also for the mischievous error in principle of narrowing the practice of the social virtues, in married people, to themselves and their children. A man loves his wife—which is, in other words, loving himself—and loves his offspring, which is equivalent to saying that he has the natural instincts of humanity; and, when he has gone thus far, he has asserted himself as a model of all the virtues of life, in the estimation of some people. In my estimation, he has only begun with the best virtues, and has others yet to practise before he can approach to the standard of a socially complete man. Can there be a lower idea of Marriage than the idea which makes it, in fact, an institution for the development of selfishness on a large and respectable scale? If I am not justified in using the word selfishness, tell me what character a good husband presents (viewed plainly as a man) when he goes out into the world, leaving all his sympathies in his wife's boudoir, and all his affections up-stairs in the nursery, and giving to his friends such shreds and patches of formal recognition, in place of true love and regard, as consist in asking them to an occasional dinner-party, and granting them the privilege of presenting his children with silver mugs? He is a model of a husband, the ladies will say. I dare not contradict them; but I should like to know whether he is also a model of a friend?

No, no. Bachelor as I am, I have a higher idea of Marriage than this. The social advantages which it is fitted to produce ought to extend beyond one man and one woman, to the circle of society amid which they move. The light of its beauty must not be shut up within the four walls which enclose the parents and the family, but must flow out into the world, and shine upon the childless and the solitary, because it has warmth enough and to spare, and because it may make them, even in their way, happy too. I began these few lines by asking sympathy and attention for the interest which a man's true friends have, when he marries, in his choosing a wife who will let them be friends still, who will even help them to mingling in closer brotherhood, if help they need. I lay down the pen, suggesting to some ladies—affectionately suggesting, if they will let me use the word, after some of the bold things I have said—that it is in their power to deprive the bachelor of the sole claim he has left to social recognition and pre-eminence, by making married men what many of them are, and what more might be—the best and truest friends that are to be found in the world.

ALUMINIUM.

The age of composite-metals, which has given us so many false Dromios pretending to brotherhood with silver, seems likely to pass away. In a short time we shall be in possession of a new metal, which need not be ashamed to announce itself by a distinct name. A pewter-pot, is simply an honest pewter-pot; he does not give himself out for a silver-tankard, a royal claret-jug, a festive flagon, a would-be chalice, or anything of that kind. There he stands on the clean deal-table, with his venerably-white bushy wig of foam; and you know that his heart overflows with generous stout, with bitter or dulcet ale, or with harmonious half-and-half. Pewter is not a humbug metal. All substitute-silvers are humbugs and changelings.

But it seems at last as if grandmother Earth, being a little aided by human wit, had been gradually preparing for the banishment

of her illegitimate offspring, by the advancement of those who are pure blood. One of Lavoisier's most remarkable prophecies was that, in the mineral substances designated by the common names of earths and alkalies, veritable metals exist. Guided by the piercing foresight of his genius, the illustrious founder of modern chemistry asserted that the fixed alkalies and the earths hitherto known by the designations of lime, magnesia, alumina, barytes, strontian, and so on, are nothing else than the oxides or rusts of special metals. Twenty years afterwards, Sir Humphry Davy, by submitting these compounds to the analysis of the voltaic pile, justified Lavoisier's prediction. By the decomposing action of the electric fluid, he separated the metal and the oxygen which had constituted, by their union, the alkalies and the earths. Treating potash and soda thus, he isolated their radical metals, potassium and sodium; and, shortly afterwards, by operating on barytes, strontian, and lime, he obtained from those earths their radical metals. But, in consequence of the feeble conducting power of the terreous compounds, other earthy bases defied him to reduce them; and, amongst them, alumina.

Davy's startling discovery of the strange stores which he found hidden in odd corners of Nature's cupboard, are well remembered; and it required no marvellous acuteness to surmise that one short-lived man had not entirely completed the examination of the stock in hand. That many of his new metals were unstable equilibriums under the ordinary influence of the air and the weather, is nothing; the properties and affinities of no one metal are any rule for what shall be the properties and affinities of another. One modern metal, platina, has proved eminently and usefully stable. Since Davy's time, however, the crop of planets overhead has been more plentiful than that of metals underground. Many chemists—amongst others, Berzelius and Oërsted—failed to extend their conquests in the same direction; and, for twenty years, these substances could only be considered as metallic oxides, in a theoretical light founded on analogy. It was not till eighteen hundred and twenty-seven that a German chemist, Wöhler, succeeded in reducing them.

But within the course of the last two years, in consequence of that first step, a treasure has been divined, unearthed, and brought to light, which it is as hard to believe in as a prosaic fact, as it is to feel assured that by descending through a trap-door in a ruined vault, you will enter an Arabian Nights' garden, wherein the leaves are emeralds and the fruits on every tree are rubies, amethysts, topazes, and carbuncles. What do you think of a metal as white as silver, as unalterable as gold, as easily melted as copper, as tough as iron; which is malleable, ductile, and with the singular quality of being lighter than glass? Such a metal does exist, and that in considerable quantities on the surface of the globe. "Where? From what distant region does it come?" There is no occasion to hunt far and wide; it is to be found everywhere, and consequently in the locality which you honour with your residence. More than that, you do not want for it within-doors at home; you touch it (not exactly by direct and simple contact) several times in the day. The poorest of men tramples it under his feet, and is possessed of at least a few samples of it. The metal, in fact, in the form of an oxide, is one of the main component elements of clay; and as clays enter into the composition of arable land, and are the material on which the potter exerts his skill, every farmer is a sort of miner or placer, and every broken potsherd is an ingot in its way. Our new-found metal is ALUMINIUM (of which alumina is the oxide), originally discovered by the German chemist Wöhler.

Wöhler was inspired with the happy thought of substituting a powerful chemical effect to the action of the voltaic pile as a means of extracting the earthy metals. Potassium and sodium, the radical metals of potash and soda, are of all metals those which offer the most energetic chemical affinities. It might, therefore, be fairly expected that, by submitting to the action of potassium or sodium one of the earthy compounds which it was desired to reduce to its elements, the potassium would destroy the combination, and would set free the new metal which was being sought in its isolated state. The experiment justified the expectation. In order to obtain metallic aluminium, M. Wöhler employed the compound which results from the union of that metal with chlorine; that is to say, chloride of aluminium. At the bottom of a porcelain crucible he placed several fragments of potassium, and, upon them, a nearly equal volume of chloride of aluminium. The crucible was placed over a spirit-of-wine lamp, and was continued there, until the action in the crucible was quite complete. Under these conditions, the chloride of aluminium was entirely decomposed; in consequence of its superior affinity, the potassium drove the aluminium from its combination with the chlorine, and laid hold of the latter substance, to form chloride of potassium, leaving the aluminium free in a metallic state. As chloride of potassium is a salt which is soluble in water, it suffices to plunge the crucible in water; the aluminium then appears in a state of liberty. The metal thus isolated presented itself as a grey powder, capable of assuming metallic brightness under friction; but, according to M. Wöhler, it refused to melt even at the highest temperature, and was essentially oxidisable. Other earthy metals were similarly obtained; all general surmises respecting their properties proved deceptive; the only point they possessed in

common was, to have hitherto remained unknown.

It is not surprising that Wöhler, when he had got his aluminium, did not conceive a full or exact idea of what sort of creature he had caught in his toils. The actual presence and existence, and the remarkable properties of the metal extracted from clay, have been known for more than a twelvemonth past; but the minds of the public, and even of learned men, have been filled with uncertainties and doubts as to the reality of the assertion and promises that have been made respecting this curious and novel production. In eighteen hundred and fifty-four M. Deville, professor of chemistry at the Ecole Normale, at Paris, having attentively studied the aluminium of which M. Wöhler had only offered a transitory glimpse, found to his surprise that the metallic stranger displayed very different qualifications to those which its discoverer attributed to it. Its real attributes are so remarkable as to encourage a very high idea of the future prospects in store for it.

When M. Dumas presented to the Academy of Arts the specimens of aluminium obtained by M. Deville, he called attention to the sonority of the metal, which rivalled that of the most sonorous brasses,—that of bell-metal, for instance. This quality has not been hitherto found in any metal in its pure state, and is another singularity in the history of clay-metal. Aluminium prepared by Messieurs Ch. and Al. Tessier, according to the conditions prescribed by M. Deville, was put into the hands of workmen in the employment of Messrs. Christophe and Co. The men report the new metal to be at least as easy to work as silver; they even state that there is no absolute necessity to re-melt it a second time. Hitherto, the means of soldering aluminium had not been found, simply on the Messrs. Tessier's authority, because alloys of the metal had not been tried. They declare that the desired result is the easiest possible. By alloying aluminium with zinc, tin, or silver, solders are obtained, whose point of fusion is much lower than that of aluminium itself, allowing the operation to be performed with a simple spirit-of-wine lamp, and even without any previous scraping or cleaning, exactly as if they were soldering silver. The Minister of Commerce was applied to, to open a competition for the manufacture of aluminium, and that the produce of such rivalry should furnish the material for the medals awarded at the close of the Universal Exposition of 'Fifty-five.

Aluminium is contained in clay in the proportion of from twenty to five-and-twenty per cent. Greenland cryolite consists of aluminium thirteen per cent., sodium nearly thirty-three per cent., and fluorine fifty-four per cent. It is of a bright and shining white; intermediate between the colour of silver and that of platina. It is lighter than glass; its tenacity is considerable; it is worked by the hammer with the greatest facility, and it may be drawn into wire of extreme fineness; it melts at a temperature lower than the point of fusion of silver. Here is a list of characteristics sufficient to entitle this simple body to take rank with the metals of daily use in the arts; but its chemical properties render it still more valuable. Aluminium is a metal completely inalterable by the atmosphere; it may be exposed without tarnishing, both to dry air and to moist air. Whilst our usual metals—such as tin, lead, and zinc—when recently cut, soon lose their brightness if exposed to dampair,—aluminium, under the same circumstances, remains as brilliant as gold, platina, or silver; it is even superior to the last of those metals as to resistance to the action of the atmosphere; in fact, silver, when exposed to sulphurated hydrogen gas, is attacked by it, and turns speedily black; and, consequently, silver articles, after a long exposure to atmospheric air, are dulled at last by the small quantities of sulphurated hydrogen which are accidentally combined with the air. Aluminium, on the contrary, offers a perfect resistance to the action of sulphurated hydrogen, and in this respect claims a notable superiority over silver. Again, aluminium decidedly resists the action of acids; azotic and sulphuric acids, applied cold, produce no effect whatever. Thin plates of aluminium may be kept immersed in azotic or sulphuric acid without suffering dissolution or even injury. Chlorydric acid alone attacks and dissolves it. The advantages to be derived from a metal endowed with such qualities are easy to be understood. Its future place as a raw material in all sorts of industrial applications is undoubted, and we may expect soon to see it, in some shape or other, in the hands of the civilised world at large.

Nevertheless, its destiny may have been in some measure mistaken. It cannot replace gold or silver in precious alloys, in coin, and jewellery. The great value and merit of gold and silver as precious metals lies in the ease with which they are withdrawn from the combinations in which they have been made to enter. By very simple chemical processes, gold and silver are with facility separated from the compounds which contain them. Aluminium, unfortunately, is devoid of that property; it cannot be eliminated in its metallic state like gold and silver from its different compounds. Instead of aluminium you get alumina—that is to say, the base of clay—a worthless substance. Nor can a metal, whose origin is so widely diffused as clay is, ever hope to be accepted, in any case, as the representative of wealth.

Aluminium, therefore, will be exclusively reserved for manufacturing requirements. It will be applied to the fabrication of vessels and instruments of all kinds in which resistance to the action of the air and to chemical agents

is indispensable. Surgeons, for instance, are hoping that it will render services of the highest class. For the decoration of interiors, where silver turns black, aluminium will shine transcendently. In proportion as the cheap production of aluminium becomes more and more an established fact, the more we shall find it entering into household uses—for travelling purposes, for instance, for which its lightness is no small merit. It may probably send tin to the right-about-face, drive copper saucepans into penal servitude, and blow up German-silver sky-high into nothing. Henceforward, respectable babies will be born with aluminium spoons in their mouths.

Such anticipations would be open to the charge of exaggeration, if aluminium were now to be produced only by the original expensive method; but potassium is entirely dispensed with. Aluminium is obtained by treating its chloride with sodium,—a substance whose chemical affinities are very energetic, and which sets the aluminium free by forming chloride of sodium. Accordingly, the manufacture consists of two operations. First, the preparation of chloride of aluminium; secondly, the decomposition of chloride of alumina by sodium.

This is not the place for further details; but it may be noted that sodium, which was formerly dear, is now to be had at a reasonable price. It is no exaggeration to insist, for instance, on the extreme innocuousness of the metal, and its suitableness for many purposes where tin is objectionable from the extreme facility with which it is dissolved by organic acids; there is no mistake about its superiority to silver in resisting solutions of salt, and to other kitchen utensils on which mixtures of salt and vinegar have a corroding effect.

M. Deville claims for aluminium no more than an intermediate rank between the precious metals and the oxidisable metals, such as tin and copper; but he feels assured that, even in that subordinate office, it will be found a most useful minister to human wants. The French Minister of Public Instruction has recognised the importance of the discovery, by recommending the promotion of the Messrs. Wöhler and Deville to be officers of the Legion of Honour; urging that the merit of the metallurgic chemists ought to be thus acknowledged, because, in his opinion, the moment had arrived when Science had already fulfilled her part, and it was the turn of manufacturing Art to begin. It is true that aluminium, in spite of its extreme profusion, and of the matters employed in its extraction, cannot yet compete in lowness of price with copper and tin, or practically even with silver. Long industrial practice alone will attain that object; but Science has nobly fulfilled her duty. She has discovered the metal, specified its properties, and organised the means of extracting it on a large scale. Scientific men have invented all, both apparatus and manipulations, and have made over to commercial manufacturers the fruit of their industry with rare disinterestedness.

The latest news is, that aluminium is now made in quantities, in various Parisian laboratories, though not very cheaply. What more ought we reasonably to expect from a chickling metal, that was only hatched the other day, and which has yet to attain its full growth and powers of flight?

A final word. If aluminium is hoping to replace either gold and silver, or copper and tin, or to take its own place without replacing anything, it may do so in the Arts and manufactures; but it never can in literature or popular speech, unless it be fitted with a new and better name. Aluminium, or, as some write it, Aluminum, is neither French nor English; but a fossilised part of Latin speech, about as suited to the mouths of the populace as an ichthyosauros cutlet or a dinornis marrow-bone. It must adopt some short and vernacular title. There would be no harm in clay-tin, while we call iron-ware tin; loam-silver might plead quicksilver, as a precedent; glebe-gold would be at least as historically true as mosaic gold. A skilful word-coiner might strike something good out of the Greek and Latin roots—argil, though a Saxon etymology is far preferable. But something in the dictionary line must be attempted. I should like to know what will become of poor "Aluminium" when it gets into the mouths of travelling tinkers or of Hebrew dealers in marine stores?

THE POOR CLARE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

DECEMBER 12, 1747. My life has been strangely bound up with extraordinary incidents, some of which occurred before I had any connection with the principal actors in them, or, indeed, before I even knew of their existence. I suppose, most old men are like me, more given to look back upon their own career with a kind of fond interest and affectionate remembrance, than to watch the events—though these may have far more interest for the multitude — immediately passing before their eyes. If this should be the case with the generality of old people, how much more so with me! . . . . If I am to enter upon that strange story connected with poor Lucy, I must begin a long way back. I myself only came to the knowledge of her family history after I knew her; but, to make the tale clear to any one else, I must arrange events in the order in which they occurred—not that in which I became acquainted with them.

There is a great old hall in the north east of Lancashire, in a part they call the Trough of Bolland, adjoining that other district named Craven. Starkey Manor House is rather like a number of rooms clustered round a

grey massive old keep than a regularly-built hall. Indeed, I suppose that the house only consisted of the great tower in the centre in the days when the Scots made their raids terrible as far south as this; and that after the Stuarts came in, and there was a little more security of property in those parts, the Starkeys of that time added the lower building, which runs, two stories high, all round the base of the keep. There has been a grand garden laid out in my days on the southern slope near the house; but when I first knew the place, the kitchen-garden at the farm was the only piece of cultivated ground belonging to it. The deer used to come within sight of the drawing-room windows, and might have browsed quite close up to the house, if they had not been too wild and shy. Starkey Manor House itself stood on a projection or peninsula of high land, jutting out from the abrupt hills that form the sides of the Trough of Bolland. These hills were rocky and bleak enough towards their summit; lower down they were clothed with tangled copse-wood and green depths of fern, out of which a grey giant of an ancient forest tree would tower here and there, throwing up its ghastly white branches, as if in imprecation, to the sky. These trees, they told me, were the remnants of that forest which existed in the days of the heptarchy, and were even then noted as landmarks. No wonder that their upper and more exposed branches were leafless, and that the dead bark had peeled away, from sapless old age.

Not far from the house there were a few cottages, apparently of the same date as the keep, probably built for some retainers of the family, who sought shelter—they and their families and their small flocks and herds—at the hands of their feudal lord. Some of them had pretty much fallen to decay. They were built in a strange fashion. Strong beams had been sunk firm in the ground at the requisite distance, and their other ends had been fastened together, two and two, so as to form the shape of one of those rounded waggon-headed gipsy tents, only very much larger. The spaces between were filled with mud, stones, osiers, rubbish, mortar—anything to keep out the weather. The fires were made in the centre of these rude dwellings, a hole in the roof forming the only chimney. No Highland hut, no Irish cabin could be of rougher construction.

The owner of this property at the beginning of the present century was a Mr. Patrick Byrne Starkey. His family had kept to the old faith, and were staunch Roman Catholics, esteeming it even a sin to marry any one of Protestant descent, however willing he or she might have been to embrace the Romish religion. Mr. Patrick Starkey's father had been a follower of James the Second; and, during the disastrous Irish campaign of that monarch, he had fallen in love with an Irish beauty, a Miss Byrne, as zealous for her religion and for the Stuarts as himself. He had returned to Ireland after his escape to France, and married her, bearing her back to the court at St. Germains. But some licence on the part of the disorderly gentlemen who surrounded King James in his exile, had insulted his beautiful wife and disgusted him; so he removed from St. Germains to Antwerp, in Belgium, whence, in a few years' time, he quietly returned to Starkey Manor House, some of his Lancashire neighbours having lent their good offices to reconcile him to the powers that were. He was as firm a Roman Catholic as ever, and as staunch an advocate for the Stuarts and the divine rights of kings; but his religion almost amounted to asceticism, and the conduct of those with whom he had been brought in such close contact at St. Germains would little bear the inspection of a stern moralist. So he gave his allegiance where he could not give his esteem, and learned to respect sincerely the upright and moral character of one whom he yet regarded as an usurper. King William's government had little need to fear such an one. So he returned, as I have said, with a sobered heart and impoverished fortunes, to his ancestral house, which had fallen sadly to ruin while the owner had been a courtier, a soldier, and an exile. The roads into the Trough of Bolland were little more than cart-ruts. Indeed, the way up to the house lay along a ploughed field before you came to the deer-park. Madam, as the country-folk used to call Mrs. Starkey, rode on a pillion behind her husband, holding on to him with a light hand by his leather riding-belt. Little Master (he that was afterwards Squire Patrick Byrne Starkey) was held on to his pony by a serving-man. A woman past middle age walked with a firm and strong step by the cart that held much of the baggage; and, high up on the mails and boxes, sate a girl of dazzling beauty, perched lightly on the topmost trunk, and swaying herself fearlessly to and fro, as the cart rocked and shook in the heavy roads of late autumn. The girl wore the Antwerp faille, or black Spanish mantle over her head, and altogether her appearance was such that the old cottager who described the procession to me many years after, said that all the country-folk took her for a foreigner. Some dogs, and the boy who held them in charge, made up the company. They rode silently along, looking with grave, serious eyes at the people, who came out of the scattered cottages to bow or curtsey to the real squire "come back at last," and gazed after them with gaping wonder, not deadened by the sound of the foreign language in which the few necessary words that passed among them were spoken. One lad, called from his staring by the Squire to come and help about the cart, accompanied them to the Manor

House. He said that when the lady had descended from her pillion, the middle-aged woman whom I have described as walking while the others rode, stepped quickly forward, and taking Madam Starkey (who was of a slight and delicate figure) in her arms, she lifted her over the threshold, and sat her down in her husband's house, at the same time uttering a passionate and outlandish blessing. The Squire stood by, smiling gravely at first; but when the words of blessing were pronounced, he took off his fine feathered hat and bent his head. The girl with the black mantle stepped onward into the shadow of the dark hall, and kissed the lady's hand; and that was all the lad could tell to the group that gathered round him on his return, eager to hear all, and to know how much the Squire had given him for his services.

From all I could gather, the Manor House was in the most dilapidated state at the time of the Squire's return. The stout grey walls remained firm and entire; but the inner chambers had been used for all kinds of purposes. The great withdrawing-room had been a barn; the state tapestry-chamber had held wool, and so on. But, by-and-by, they were cleared out; and if the Squire had no money to spend on new furniture, he and his wife had the knack of making the best of the old. He was no despicable joiner; she had a kind of grace in whatever she did, and imparted an air of elegant picturesqueness to whatever she touched. Besides, they had brought many rare things from the Continent; perhaps I should rather say, things that were rare in that part of England —carvings, and crosses, and beautiful pictures. And then, again, wood was plentiful in the Trough of Bolland, and great log-fires danced and glittered in all the dark old rooms, and gave a look of home and comfort to everything.

Why do I tell you all this? I have little to do with the Squire and Madam Starkey; and yet I dwell upon them, as if I were unwilling to come to the real people with whom my life was so strangely mixed up. Madam had been nursed in Ireland by the very woman who took her up and welcomed her to her husband's home, in Lancashire. Excepting for the short period of her own married life, Bridget Fitzgerald had never left her nursling. Her marriage, —to one above her in rank—had been unhappy. Her husband had died and left her in even greater poverty than that in which she was when he had met with her at first. She had one child, the beautiful daughter who came riding on the waggon-load of furniture that was brought to the Manor House, Madam Starkey had taken her again into her service when she became a widow. She and her daughter had followed "the mistress" in all her fortunes; they had lived at St. Germains and at Antwerp; and were now come to her home in Lancashire. As soon as Bridget had arrived there, the Squire gave her a cottage of her own, and took more pains in furnishing it for her, than he did in anything else out of his own house. It was only nominally her residence. She was constantly up at the great house; indeed, it was only a short cut across the woods from her own home to the home of her nursling. Her daughter Mary in like manner moved from one house to another at her own will. Madam loved both mother and child dearly. They had great influence over her, and, through her, over her husband. Whatever Bridget or Mary willed, was sure to come to pass. They were not disliked; for, though wild and passionate, they were also generous by nature. But the other servants were afraid of them, as being in secret the ruling spirits of the household. The Squire had lost his interest in all secular things; Madam was gentle, affectionate, and yielding. Both husband and wife were tenderly attached to each other and to their boy; but they grew more and more to shun the trouble of decision on any point; and hence it was that Bridget could exert such despotic power. But if every one else yielded to her "magic of a superior mind," her daughter not unfrequently rebelled. She and her mother were too much alike to agree. There were wild quarrels between them; and wilder reconciliations. There were times when, in the heat of passion, they could have stabbed each other. At all other times they both—Bridget especially—would have willingly laid down their lives for one another. Bridget's love for her child lay very deep—deeper than that daughter ever knew; or I should think she would never have wearied of home as she did, and prayed her mistress to obtain for her some situation—as waiting-maid—beyond the seas, in that more cheerful continental life, among the scenes of which so many of her happiest years had been spent. She thought, as youth thinks, that life would last for ever, and that two or three years were but a small portion of it to pass away from her mother, whose only child she was. Bridget thought differently, but was too proud ever to show what she felt. If her child wished to leave her, why—she should go. But people said Bridget became ten years older in the course of two months at this time. She took it that Mary wanted to leave her; the truth was, that Mary wanted for a time to leave the place and to seek some change, and would thankfully have taken her mother with her. Indeed, when Madam Starkey had gotten her a place with some grand lady abroad, and the time drew near for her to go, it was Mary who clung to her mother with passionate embrace, and, with floods of tears, declared that she would never leave her; and it was Bridget, who at last loosened her arms, and, grey and tearless herself, bade her keep her word, and go forth into the wide world. Sobbing aloud,

and looking back continually, Mary went away. Bridget was as still as death, scarcely drawing her breath, or closing her stony eyes; till at last she turned back into her cottage and heaved a ponderous old settle against the door. There she sat, motionless, over the grey ashes of her extinguished fire, deaf to Madam's sweet voice, as she begged leave to enter and comfort her nurse. Deaf, stony, and motionless she sat for more than twenty hours; till, for the third time, Madam came across the snowy path from the great house, carrying with her a young spaniel, which had been Mary's pet up at the hall, and which had not ceased all night long to seek for its absent mistress, and to whine and moan after her. With tears Madam told this story, through the closed door—tears excited by the terrible look of anguish, so steady, so immovable,—so the same to-day as it was yesterday,—on her nurse's face. The little creature in her arms, began to utter its piteous cry, as it shivered with the cold. Bridget stirred; she moved —she listened. Again that long whine; she thought it was for her daughter; and what she had denied to her nursling and mistress she granted to the dumb creature that Mary had cherished. She opened the door and took the dog from Madam's arms. Then Madam came in, and kissed and comforted the old woman, who took but little notice of her or anything. And sending up Master Patrick to the hall for fire and food, the sweet young lady never left her nurse all that night. Next day, the Squire himself came down, carrying a beautiful foreign picture; Our Lady of the Holy Heart, the Papists call it. It is a picture of the Virgin, her heart pierced with arrows, each arrow representing one of her great woes. That picture hung in Bridget's cottage when I first saw her; I have that picture now.

Years went on. Mary was still abroad. Bridget was still and stern, instead of active and passionate. The little dog, Mignon, was indeed her darling. I have heard that she talked to it continually, although, to most people, she was so silent. The Squire and Madam treated her with the greatest consideration, and well they might; for to them she was as devoted and faithful as ever. Mary wrote pretty often, and seemed satisfied with her life. But at length the letters ceased —I hardly know whether before or after a great and terrible sorrow came upon the house of the Starkeys. The Squire sickened of a putrid fever; and Madam caught it in nursing him, and died. You may be sure, Bridget let no other woman tend her but herself; and in the very arms that had received her at her birth, that sweet young woman laid her head down and gave up her breath. The Squire recovered, in a fashion. He was never strong—he had never the heart to smile again. He fasted and prayed more than ever; and people did say that he tried to cut off the entail, and leave all the property away to found a monastery abroad, of which he prayed that some day little Squire Patrick might be the reverend father. But he could not do this, for the strictness of the entail and the laws against the Papists. So he could only appoint gentlemen of his own faith as guardians to his son, with many charges about the lad's soul, and a few about the land, and the way it was to be held while he was a minor. Of course, Bridget was not forgotten. He sent for her as he lay on his death-bed, and asked her if she would rather have a sum down, or have a small annuity settled upon her. She said at once she would have a sum down; for she thought of her daughter, and how she could bequeath the money to her, whereas an annuity would have died with her. So the Squire left her her cottage for life, and a fair sum of money. And then he died with as ready and willing a heart as, I suppose, ever any gentleman took out of this world with him. The young Squire was carried off by his guardians, and Bridget was left alone.

I have said that she had not heard from Mary for some time. In her last letter, she had told of travelling about with her mistress, who was the English wife of some great foreign officer, and had spoken of her chances of making a good marriage, without naming the gentleman's name, keeping it rather back as a pleasant surprise to her mother, his station and fortune being, as I had afterwards reason to know, far superior to anything she had a right to expect. Then came a long silence; and Madam was dead, and the Squire was dead; and Bridget's heart was gnawed by anxiety, and she knew not whom to ask for news of her child. She could not write, and the Squire had managed her communication with her daughter. She walked off to Hurst; and got a good priest there—one whom she had known at Antwerp—to write for her. But no answer came. It was like crying into the awful stillness of night.

One day Bridget was missed by those neighbours who had been accustomed to mark her out-goings and in-comings. She had never been sociable with any of them; but the sight of her had become a part of their daily lives, and slow wonder arose in their minds, as morning after morning came, and her house-door remained closed, her window dead from any glitter, or light of fire within. At length, some one tried the door; it was locked. Two or three laid their heads together, before daring to look in through the blank, unshuttered window. But, at last, they summoned up courage; and then saw that Bridget's absence from their little world was not the result of accident or death, but of premeditation. Such small articles of furniture as could be secured from the effects of time and damp by being packed up, were stowed away in boxes. The picture of the

Madonna was taken down, and gone. In a word, Bridget had stolen away from her home, and left no trace where she was departed. I knew afterwards, that she and her little dog had wandered off on the long search for her lost daughter. She was too illiterate to have faith in letters, even had she had the means of writing and sending many. But she had faith in her own strong love, and believed that her passionate instinct would guide her to her child. Besides, foreign travel was no new thing to her, and she could speak enough of French to explain the object of her journey, and had moreover the advantage of being, from her faith, a welcome object of charitable hospitality at many a distant convent. But the country people round Starkey Manor House knew nothing of all this. They wondered what had become of her, in a torpid, lazy fashion, and then left off thinking of her altogether. Several years passed. Both Manor House and cottage were deserted. The young Squire lived far away under the direction of his guardians. There were inroads of wool and corn into the sitting-rooms of the Hall; and some low talk, from time to time, among the hinds and country-people, whether it would not be as well to break into old Bridget's cottage, and save such of her goods as were left from the moth and rust which must be making sad havoc. But this idea was always quenched by the recollection of her strong character, and passionate anger; and tales of her masterful spirit, and vehement force of will were whispered about, till the very thought of offending her, by touching any article of hers, became invested with a kind of horror; it was believed that dead or alive she would not fail to avenge it.

Suddenly, she came home; with as little noise or note of preparation as she had departed. One day, some one noticed a thin, blue curl of smoke, ascending from her chimney. Her door stood open to the noon-day sun; and ere many hours had elapsed, some one had seen an old travel and sorrow-stained woman dipping her pitcher in the well; and said, that the dark, solemn eyes that looked up at him were more like Bridget Fitzgerald's than any one else's in this world; and yet, it it were she, she looked as if she had been scorched in the flames of hell, so brown, and scared, and fierce a creature did she seem. By-and-by, many saw her; and those who met her eye once, cared not to be caught looking at her again. She had got into the habit of perpetually talking to herself; nay, more, answering herself, and varying her tones according to the side she took at the moment. It was no wonder that those who dared to listen outside her door at night, believed that she held converse with some spirit; in short, she was unconsciously earning for herself the dread reputation of a witch.

Her little dog, which had wandered half over the Continent with her, was her only companion; a dumb remembrancer of happier days. Once he was ill; and she carried him more than three miles, to ask about his management from one who had been groom to the last Squire, and had then been noted for his skill in all diseases of animals. Whatever this man did, the dog recovered; and they who heard her thanks, intermingled with blessings (that were rather promises of good fortune than prayers) looked grave at his good luck when, next year, his ewes twinned, and his meadow-grass was heavy and thick.

Now it so happened that, about the year seventeen hundred and eleven, one of the guardians of the young Squire, a certain Sir Philip Tempest, bethought him ot the good shooting there must be on his ward's property; and in consequence, he brought down four or five gentlemen of his friends to stay for a week or two at the Hall. From all accounts, they roystered and spent pretty freely. I never heard any of their names but one, and that was Squire Gisborne's. He was hardly a middle-aged man then; he had been much abroad, and there, I believe, he had known Sir Philip Tempest, and done him some service. He was a daring and dissolute fellow in those days; careless and fearless, and one who would rather be in a quarrel than out of it. He had his fits of ill-temper beside, when he would spare neither man nor beast. Otherwise, those who knew him well, used to say he had a good heart, when he was neither drunk, nor angry, nor in any way vexed. He had altered much when I came to know him.

One day, the gentlemen had all been out shooting, and with but little success, I believe; any how, Mr. Gisborne had had none, and was in a black humour accordingly. He was coming home, having his gun loaded, sportsman-like, when little Mignon crossed his path, just as he turned out of the wood by Bridget's cottage. Partly for wantonness, partly to vent his spleen upon some living creature, Mr. Gisborne took his gun, and fired —he had better have never fired gun again, than aimed that unlucky shot. He hit Mignon; and at the creature's sudden cry, Bridget came out, and saw at a glance what had been done. She took Mignon up in her arms, and looked hard at the wound; the poor dog looked at her with his glazing eyes, and tried to wag his tail and lick her hand, all covered with blood. Mr. Gisborne spoke in a kind of sullen penitence:

"You should have kept the dog out of my way; a little poaching varmint."

At this very moment, Mignon stretched out his legs, and stiffened in her arms—her lost Mary's dog, who had wandered and sorrowed with her for years. She walked right into Mr. Gisborne's path, and fixed his unwilling, sullen look with her dark and terrible eye.

"Those never throve that did me harm," said she. "I'm alone in the world, and helpless; the more do the Saints in Heaven hear my prayers. Hear me, ye blessed ones! hear me while I ask for sorrow on this bad, cruel man. He has killed the only creature that loved me—the dumb beast that I loved. Bring down heavy sorrow on his head for that deed, O ye Saints! He thought that I was helpless, because he saw me lonely and poor; but are not the armies of Heaven for such a one as me?"

"Come, come," said he, half-remorseful, but not one whit afraid. "Here's a crown to buy thee another dog. Take it and leave off cursing! I care none for thy threats."

"Don't you?" said she, coming a step closer, and changing her imprecatory cry for a whisper which made the gamekeeper's lad, following Mr. Gisborne, creep all over. "You shall live to see the creature you love best, and who alone loves you—ay, a human creature, but as innocent and fond as my poor dead darling—you shall see this creature, for whom death would be too happy, become a terror and a loathing to all for this blood's sake. Hear me, O holy Saints, who never fail them that have no other help!"

She threw up her right hand, filled with poor Mignon's life-drops; they spirted, one or two of them, on his shooting-dress,—an ominous sight to the follower. But the master only laughed a little, forced, scornful laugh, and went on to the Hall. Before he got there, however, he took out a gold piece, and bade the boy carry it to the old woman on his return to the village. The lad was "afeared," as he told me in after years; he came to the cottage, and hovered about, not daring to enter. He peeped through the window at last; and by the flickering wood-flame, he saw Bridget kneeling before the picture of our Lady of the Holy Heart, with dead Mignon lying between her and the Madonna. She was praying wildly, as her outstretched arms betokened. The lad shrank away in redoubled terror; and contented himself with slipping the gold-piece under the ill-fitting door. The next day it was thrown out upon the midden; and there it lay, no one daring to touch it.

Meanwhile Mr. Gisborne, half curious, half uneasy, thought to lessen his uncomfortable feelings by asking Sir Philip who Bridget was? He could only describe her—he did not know her name. Sir Philip was equally at a loss. But an old servant of the Starkeys, who had resumed his livery at the Hall on this occasion—a scoundrel whom Bridget had saved from dismissal more than once during her palmy days—said:

"It will be the old witch, that his worship means. She needs a ducking, if ever woman did, does that Bridget Fitzgerald."

"Fitzgerald!" said both the gentlemen at once. But Sir Philip was the first to continue:

"I must have no talk of ducking her, Dickon. Why, she must be the very woman poor Starkey bade me have a care of; but when I came here last she was gone, no one knew where. I'll go and see her to-morrow. But mind you, sirrah, if any harm comes to her, or any more talk of her being a witch—I've a pack of hounds at home, who can follow the scent of a lying knave as well as ever they followed a dog-fox; so take care how you talk about ducking a faithful old servant of your dead master's."

"Had she ever a daughter?" asked Mr. Gisborne, after a while.

"I don't know—yes! I've a notion she had; a kind of waiting-woman to Madam Starkey."

"Please your worship," said humbled Dickon, "Mistress Bridget had a daughter—one Mistress Mary—who went abroad, and has never been heard on since; and folk do say that has crazed her mother."

Mr. Gisborne shaded his eyes with his hand.

"I could wish she had not cursed me," he muttered. "She may have power—no one else could." After a while, he said aloud, no one understanding rightly what he meant, "Tush! it's impossible!"—and called for claret; and he and the other gentlemen set-to to a drinking-bout.

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

A COUNTRY HOUSE.

I WANT to say a word more about Ireland, not argumentatively, but as an illustration. I should have been dishonest in blinking Skibbereen; the more so, as in all the narratives I have heard of the social characteristics of these appalling visitations, I could not help being struck with their grim and minute similitude to some features of the Irish famine that came within my own knowledge at the time. Some of the coincidences were extraordinary. The patience of the people. Their swarthiness of hue from inanition. Their patience and meekness during unexampled agony; and above all, their nakedness. To be naked and a-hungered would seem to be natural—the hungry man selling his clothes to buy bread; but these people, Irish and Russian, went naked when they had plenty of rags, unsaleable, but warmth-containing. There seem to be certain extreme stages of human misery, in which a man can no longer abide his garments. I have a curious remembrance of being told by a relative, who was in the famine-stricken districts in eighteen forty seven, that, once losing his way over a mountain, he entered a cabin to inquire the proper road, and there found seven people of both sexes, children and adults, crouching round an empty saucepan, and all as bare as robins! The eldest girl, who volunteered to show him the straight road was modest as

Irish girls are proud to be, and as she rose to escort him, clapped a wooden bowl over her shoulder, as if it had been the expansive cloak of the demon page whom we read of in the Percy Reliques.

I have been thinking of all these things and a great many more over tea and tobacco in the Starosta's house in M. de Katorichassoff's village. There Alexis and I are comfortably seated during the noon-tide heats. The Starosta's daughter would have washed our feet for us, as Penelope's hand-maidens did for Ulysses, or Fergus Mac'Ivor's duinhie wassals for Waverley, if we had had any inclination that way. Perhaps I had corns; perhaps Alexis, already becoming Russianised, had, like many of his patent leather booted countrymen, no stockings on. It is certain that we did not avail ourselves of the footbath. The Starosta has informed us several times and with as many profound bows, that his house no longer belongs to him, but that it, its contents, himself, his children and grandchildren, are ours, and at the absolute disposal of our excellencies. Excellencies! By the long-winded, multisyllabic, but mellifluous epithets he has bestowed on Alexis he must have called him his majesty, his coruscation, his scintillation, his milky-way, by this time. The Russians are great proficients in low bows, and to bien savoir tirer la révérence is considered a superlative accomplishment. A distinguished Professor of Natural History attached to the university of Moscow—a great savant and a very taciturn man—once remarked to me gravely that his brother Waldemar made the best bow of any boyard in the government of Simbersk, and added: Ce garçon là fera son chemin—and indeed this is a country where, by dint of continuous and assiduous booing, you may make surprising way in fortune and dignity. If you will bow low enough you may be sure to rise high in the Tchinn; and if you don't mind grovelling a little on your stomach, and swallowing a little dust, there is no knowing to what imperial employment you may aspire. I think that Alexis has a secret admiration and envy of Genghis Khan, owing to the profoundly graceful bows that Tartar chieftain is so frequently making. I don't mind low bows. Perhaps if I knew an English duke I should be inclined to make him very low bows myself—at all events, I have compatriots who would; but it is inexpressibly painful and disgusting to a western traveller in Russia, when he happens to be on a visit at a gentleman's country house, to see stalwart bearded men positively falling down and worshipping some scrubby young seigneur. If a peasant has the slightest favour to ask of his lord, the promotion of his wife for instance from the scullery to the fine-linen laundry, he begins his suit by falling plump on his knees, and touching the earth with his forehead. Even in Petersburg, where Nous Autres do not like to show the slave-owner's element more than they can help, I have seen a sprightly young seigneur keep a grey-haired servitor full ten minutes on his knees before him lighting his pipe—cheerfully calling him swinia and durac (pig and fool) meanwhile, and playfully chucking him under the chin with the toe of his Kasan boot.

We have refused the refreshment of vitchina, or dried pork, piroga, or meat pies, and ogourtzhoff, or salted cucumbers; but we have cheerfully accepted the offer of a samovar, which, huge, brazen, and battered, glowers in the midst of the table like the giant helmet in the Castle of Otranto. We have our own tea and cups in the tin-chest, but the Starosta won't hear of our using either. He has tea—and capital tea it is—rather like tobacco in colour, and tasting slightly as if it had been kept in a cannister in Mr. Atkinson the perfumer's shop; besides this, he has, not tumblers for us to drink our tea from, but some articles he has the greatest pride and joy in producing—porcelansky, he calls them, in a voice quavering with emotion, as he takes them out of the chest containing his valuables. The porcelansky consists of two very fair china tea-cups, one of them minus a handle, but the loss supplied with a neat curve of twisted iron wire, and both duly set in saucers. One saucer is indubitable china; it does not match the cup in size or pattern, certainly, but let that pass; the other is—the cover of one of those shallow earthenware pots in which preserved meats and anchovy paste are sold! I turn the familiar lid upside down, and there my eyes are gladdened with the sight of a coloured engraving burnt into the clay—the interior of Shakespeare's house at Stratford-upon-Avon! My thoughts immediately revert to Mr. Quain's oyster-shop in the Haymarket, London, and I burst out laughing, to the amazement and abashment of the Starosta, who, thinking I am ridiculing him for having placed his saucer with the handsome part underneath, hastens to explain to Alexis that the cup won't maintain its position unless the saucer is turned upside down, expressing his regret, as the picture, which he assumes to be a view of the Dvoretz Londoni-Gorod, or, Palace of the City of London, is dolgo harasho (very handsome indeed). Alexis, it is needless to say, interprets all this; for my Russ is of the very weakest, as yet. Yet I cannot help a slight suspicion that my young friend's Moscov is not of the most powerful description, and that he makes very free translations of the Starosta's discourse for my benefit, and that, like the dragoman in Eothen, he renders such a speech as "Your mightinesses are welcome; most blessed among hours is this, the hour of his coming," by "The old fellow is paying us a lot of compliments. We are welcome enough, that is certain." The Starosta never saw Alexis

before, but he has known the calêche for years, and he knows that the lad's senior aunt is the Baronessa Bigwigitsin, and if the Russo-American chose to eat him out of house and home, the Starosta would bow lower than ever, so near-neighbourly is he, and such an unfeigned and disinterested attachment has he for the juvenile aristocracy. For, the Russian peasant, who is always burning a lamp before the shrine of his saint, astutely thinks that there is no harm in burning a candle to the other power, too: so he worships his seigneur, who is the very devil to him.

I have had two tumblers of tea; and by this time I have taken stock of the Starosta's house. It is the best in the village of Volnoï, and I should think the Starosta must have been a thrifty old gentleman, and must be, by this time, pretty well to do in the world. I am sorry to hear from Alexis, however, that our venerable friend declares that he has not a kopeck in the world, and that he and his family are "whistling in their fists" for hunger. "He is a liar," Alexis says, unaffectedly. "They are all liars." The Starosta's dwelling, though, does not offer many signs of penury or distress. Here is the inventory.

There is but one room on the ground-floor: a sufficiently vast apartment, of which the walls are of logs in all their native roundness, and the ceiling also of logs, but on which, to be quite genteel, some imperfect attempts at squaring have been made. There is not a glimpse of white-washing, painting, or paper-hanging to be seen. The great Russian painter and decorator, Dirtoff, has taken the chamber in hand, and has toned down walls, and ceiling, and flooring to one agreeable dingy grey. There is not much dust about; no great litter, where all is litter; not over-many cobwebs in the corners. The dirt is concrete. It is part of the party walls; and I think that a thoroughly good scrubbing would send the Starosta's house tumbling about his ears. There are two windows to the room; one is a show-window—a large aperture, filled with a peculiar dull, grey, sheenless glass. The panes are so gently and uniformly darkened with dirt, that the window serves much more to prevent impertinent wayfarers from looking in, than to assist the inmates of the mansion in looking out. The second window is a much smaller casement, cut apparently at random high up in the wall, and close to the ceiling, and of no particular shape. Its panes are filled with something, but what that something may be I am unable to determine: not glass for a certainty, for the panes bulge inward, and some flap idly to and fro in the hot summer wind, which, like a restless dog, is wagging its tail in the sun outside;—rags, perhaps, paper it may be, dried fish-skins—a favourite preparation for glazing windows, very likely. Whatever it be, it produces a very unwholesome-looking semi-transparency; and big black spiders, tarrakans, and other ogglesome insects, crawl over its jaundiced field, like hideous ombres chinoises. One end of the apartment is partitioned off by a raw-wooden screen, some six feet in height; but whether that be the family bed-chamber or the family pigstye I am quite at a loss to say. The former hypothesis is scarcely tenable, inasmuch as beneath the image of the saint there is a sort of wooden pit, half above ground and half under it—half a sarcophagus and half a ditch—which from a mighty bolster—that gigantic sausage-like sack of black leather must be a bolster, for I can see the oleaginous marks on it where heads have lain—and a counterpane bariolé in so many stripes and counterstripes of different colours that it looks like the union-jack, I conjecture to be the Starosta's family bed. His summer bed, of course; where his winter bed is we all know—it is there on the top of the long stove, where the heap of once white—now black with dirt and grease—sheepskins are. If I had any doubt about this wooden grave being a bed, it would be at once dispelled; first, by the sight of a leg covered with a dusty boot which suddenly surges into the air from beneath the waves of the parti-coloured counterpane like the mast of a wrecked vessel; and ultimately by a head dusty and dishevelled as to its hair, and bright crimson as to its face, which bobs up to the surface, glimmers for a moment, and then disappears—to continue the nautical simile—like the revolving pharos of the Kish Lightship. From a hiccup, too, and a grunt, I am further enabled to conjecture that there must be somebody in the bed; and, from some suppressed whisperings, I am inclined to think that there are some small matters in the way of children down somewhere in the vast depths of this Russian Great Bed of Ware. On the latter subject I am not enlightened; but on the former my mind is set at rest by the statement volunteered by the Starosta, that his eldest grandson Sophron is lying down there, "as drunk as oil"—whatever that state of intoxication may be. He went out this morning, it appears, to the Seignorial Kontova, or steward's office, with a little present to the Alemansky-Bourmister, or German Intendant of the Barynn, and on Gospodin Vandegutler's deigning to give Sophron some green wine, or vodki, Sophron deigned to drink thereof, till he found himself, or was found, in the aforesaid oily state of drunkenness. I should say myself, that Sophron is more what may be termed "dumb drunk;" for, on his grandfather seizing him by the hair of his head on one of its visits to the surface, and rating him in most abusive Russ, Sophron makes superhuman efforts to reply, but can get no further than an incoherent and inarticulate gabble; after which, leaving some of his hair behind like seaweed, he dives down to the bottom of the counterpane ocean

—again to confer, I suppose, with his little brothers and sisters, or with Neptune, or the Nereides, or the Great Sea Serpent. "The ape and pig," says the vexed Starosta, "threw himself into the bed while I was at Mestrophan's mill. I could sober him in a moment with a bucket of water, but your excellencies will understand that I do not want to spoil the pastyel (or bed), which is of great civlation (civilisation), and came from Moscow, where my eldest son Dmitri has been an Ischvostchik-Macter for twenty years, paying one hundred and eighty silver roubles yearly to his lord and ours, the Barynn Vacil Apollodorovich (M. de K.), and owning himself fourteen droschkies with their horses." Apparently fearing that he had let the cat somewhat out of the moneybag in alluding to the prosperous condition of his son Dmitri, the Starosta hastened to assure Alexis that the obrok (or yearly slaverent) was a frightfully hard thing for a poor Christianin to pay, and that what with that and the police and the government dues, his poor Dmitri had nothing to feed or clothe his children with. "This is his son," he adds, pointing to the part of the counterpane where the oily drunkard had last foundered with all hands, and his cargo of green wine on board: "judge what we are able to do with such a cow's-nephew as this on our hands! However, if your excellencies will deign to pardon me, I will soon rid you of this Turk's-brother's presence." I don't know what Alexis answers to this harangue, but I hasten to assure the Starosta with much gesticulation, and many harostros and nitchevos (all right and never mind), that I have not the slightest objection to the drunken man in the bed, and, as he is quite dumb, that I rather like his revolving lighthouse appearance than otherwise. The Starosta, however, apparently convinced that he or Sophron must be sinning against etiquette in some way or other, makes a last desperate plunge after that shipwrecked convivialist. He brings him to the shore after much puffing and blowing, and rolls or drags his long body across the floor and out at the front door, where, from some dull heavy sounds, and a terrific howling, I presume that he is correcting his grandson with a joint-stool, or a log of wood, or a crowbar, or a hatchet, or some switch-like trifle of that description. Then I hear the slush of the proposed bucket of water. The Starosta comes in, and re-apologises to Alexis; and when Sophron rejoins us, which he does in about ten minutes to fill the samovar, he is, though still very damp and somewhat tangled about the hair, and purply-streaked about the face, as grave, sober, and likely a young Russian as ever wore a red shirt and made beautiful bows.

I have spoken of the image of the saint. It is here that the Starosta's commercial secret oozes out. It is here that the paucity of copecks, and the sibilation in the fists for hunger becomes notorious as airy fabrications. Like every Russian peasant shopkeeper-merchant—from the miserable moujik of a crown-village to the merchant of the first guild with his millions of roubles—Nicolai Iatchkoff, the Starosta's pride and pleasure is to have a joss in his house, as handsome as ever he can afford it to be. And a brave St. Nicholas he has. The picture itself is simply hideous—a paralytic saint with an enormous aureole, like a straw hat, sitting in a most uncomfortable attitude upon a series of cream-coloured clouds in regular tiers, like the wig of the Lord Mayor's coachman. It is painted, or rather daubed, in the most glaring and coarsest oil-colours; but the aureole above the saint's head is formed of metallic rays of a certain dull, yellow, Guinea-coast like appearance that make me certain—though the Starosta would probably call St. Nicholas himself to witness that the contrary was the fact—that these rays are of pure gold. And there are some rings on St. Nicholas's fingers, and some stars on his alb and rochet, and a great bulb on his pastoral crook, that are green, and white, and crimson, and glisten very suspiciously. I have an idea that they are emeralds, and carbuncles, and seed pearls, my friend Nicolai. I know the massive, chased, and embossed lamp that hangs, always kindled, before the image to be silver; the picture itself is covered with a fair wide sheet of plate-glass; the whole is framed in rosewood, carved and gilded in great profusion; and I should not at all wonder if the original cost of this image to the soi-disant impoverished Starosta had been five hundred silver roubles at the very least. St. Nicholas is one of the most popular and most considered of the Russian saints, and the late Czar probably owed no small portion of his immense influence to the fact of his bearing the same name as that saint of high renown. Touching St. Nicholas, there is a ludicrous tradition current among the Russian peasantry to the effect that he once had a theological dispute with Martin Luther, and that they agreed to settle it by a walking-match. It was to be so many hundred versts up a mountain, and neither party was to have any assistance beyond a stout walking-staff. For once the Protestant champion was victorious, for St. Nicholas was thoroughly blown before he had accomplished half the journey. The detested heretic came back triumphant, but with empty hands. "Where's your walking-stick, dog's son?" cried the good St. Nicholas. "An't please you, I ate it," answered his opponent. The wary Doctor Martin Luther had had a walking-stick constructed of good black-puddings twisted together, and had eaten as he walked—the creature comforts giving him such bodily strength that he had easily overcome his antagonist.

The large ground-floor apartment, as it

may be called, though it is raised somewhat above the level of the soil, as you shall hear presently, is called the Balschoï-Isba, or big room; and sometimes, on the eternal lucus a non lucendo, however sombre it may be, the Beleeïa-Isba, or Chamber of Light. The space at the end, partitioned off like a churchwarden's pew, is considered as strictly private,—there is no admittance except on business. When I say private, I mean, of course, to persons of the peasants' own degree; the shaven-chins—by which title the hirsute Moujiks sometimes designate those whose nobility, official standing, military employment, or foreign extraction, entitle them to go beardless—enter where they please, and do what they please, when they deign to enter a peasant's house. And here a parenthesis respecting beards. (One of the last items of advice volunteered to me by a very dear friend, just previous to leaving England for Russia, was to let my beard grow. I should find it so comfortable in travelling, he said. I had all the wish, though perhaps not the power to effect this desirable consummation; but I very soon found, on my arrival at St. Petersburg, that if I wanted to be waited on with promptitude in hotels, spoken to with civility by police-officers, or received with politeness in society, I must go with a smoothly-shaven chin. Moustaches were generally patronised, whiskers tolerated; but a beard—the nasty Moujiks wore beards! The only person moving in elevated Russian society, six months ago, who ventured to set the aristocratic squeamishness as to hairy chins at defiance, was the American minister, who was bearded like the pard. Then, in July, came out Lord Wodehouse, our ambassador, also wearing a beard of respectable dimensions; and the enormous influx of strangers into Moscow at the coronation fêtes, and the cosmopolitan variety of aristocratic beards wagged thereat, must by this time have familiarised the Russians with the sight of hairy chins unassociated with sheepskin coats and baggy breeches.)

Why "deign" to enter? you may ask. Why deign to do this or that? For I am conscious of having repeated the locution with considerable frequency. The fact is, that the Russian peasant does not say of his superior—and especially of his lord—that he eats, or drinks, or sleeps; but that he deigns to taste something; that he deigns to moisten his lips; that he deigns to take some repose. These words—he deigns—become at last so natural to the serf in speaking of his master, that it is anything but rare to hear from his mouth such phrases as these: "The Barynn deigned to have the measles. His excellency deigned to tumble down-stairs. His lordship deigned to die." Isvolit Kapout! This, it seems to me, is the converse to the historical tournure de phrase of Lord Castlecomer's mamma when his lordship's tutor happened to break his leg, "which was so very inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer." The miserable condition of the souls attached to the glebe is brought to your mind by a hundred slavish proverbs and expressions. Slavery is so well organised, and so saturates the social system, that the very dictionary is impregnated with slavish words. A people philologically servile, and whose proverbs exhale a spirit of dog-like obedience and hopeless resignation, and sometimes abject glorification of despotism, is indeed a rarity. The miserable Africans, debased as they have been by centuries of bondage, have no such popular sayings, if I remember rightly, as, "Cow-hide am good for niggers;" "Woolly head and scored back always go together;" "Sky too high up, Canada too far off." But among the Russian peasants, these are a few of the proverbs current and common: "A man who has been well beaten is worth two men who haven't been beaten." "Five hundred blows with a stick will make a good grenadier; a thousand a dragoon; and none at all a captain." "'Tis only the lazy ones who don't beat us." Can anything be more horrible than this tacit, shoulder-shrugging, almost smirking acceptation of the stick as an accomplished fact,—of the Valley of the Shadow of Stick as a state of life into which it has pleased God to call them! Again: "Heaven is too high: the Czar is too far off." This is simply Dante's Lasciate ogni speranza Russianised. Again: "All belongs to God and the Czar." "Though against thy heart, always be ready to do what thou art ordered to do." "One can be guilty without guilt." The last proverb, with the preceding one, imply an abnegation of the duties and responsibilities of manhood altogether. Its application justifies a serf in robbing and murdering at the command of his master; the serf is guilty, but the onus of guilt is on him who sets him on. There is one Russian proverb that breathes something like a feeble consciousness of the horrors of slavery, and the corresponding blessings of liberty. "The bird is well enough in a golden cage, but he is better on a green branch." There is another proverb I have heard, couched in a somewhat similar spirit: "The labourer works like a peasant [a slave], but he sits down to table like a lord." This is too politically and economically wise, I am afraid, to be genuine, and has probably been invented ad hoc, and placed in the mouth of the Moujik by some anti-slavery philanthropists. In familiar conversation you will sometimes hear a Russian say: "Without cutting my head off, allow me to say," &c. This is a pleasant reminiscence of the formula anciently observed in commencing a petition to the Czar: "Do not order our heads to be cut off, O mighty Czar, for presuming to address you, but hear us!" The Russian equivalent to our verb "to petition" is "to strike the ground with one's forehead." And the "yes, sir," of a tchelovik,

or eating-house waiter, when you order a chop, is "Sluschett" (I hear and obey). Will any man believe that this system of slavery, which would appear to be the growth of twenty centuries, which has its language, and proverbs, and folk-lore, is, in its authorised and consolidated form, barely two hundred and fifty years old? It only dates, legally, from the reign of Boris Godounoff. But I happened to speak of dictionaries. Oyez, oyez! let all men know that the imperial Catherine, second of that name, and of imperishable memory, positively issued, one day—perhaps in an access of capricious philanthropy, and after receiving a letter from D'Alembert—an oukase ordering the word Slave to be for ever and ever erased and expunged from the imperial dictionary. The philosophical firm of D'Alembert, Diderot, and Co., made a great deal of this at the time, and there have been some attempts to make more of it since. For my part, I must say that the imperial word-suppression reminds me very much of the manner in which penitent (in Pentonville) housebreakers speak of their last burglary (accompanied by violence), as their culpable folly. And yet this wretched people seem as habituated and to the manner born to slavery, as if they had been serfs from the time when it was said to Ham, "A slave and a servant shalt thou be;" and as if there were really any truth in the grinning theory of the German traveller, that the Russian back was organised to receive blows, and that his nerves are less delicate than those of western nations.

The reader has been deigning, I am afraid, to wait a long time for the conclusion of the inventory of the Starosta's house at Volnoï; and I have been in truth an unconscionable time in possession. But the Starosta's house, though it is but a log hut, is full of pegs to hang thoughts upon; though I must now really leave the pegs, and give the walls a turn. There are thereupon some more works of art—secular ones—besides the ecclesiastical triumph of the blessed Saint Nicholas. In poorer cottages (if the pretty, homely, ivy and honeysuckle smelling name of cottage can be applied to the dreary dull dens the Russians live in), these lay pictures would probably be merely the ordinary Loubotchynia, vile daubs of the reigning Czar, or of Petr' Velikè, glaring on sheets of bark, or the coarsest paper. But the Starosta being rich, he has four notable engravings—real engravings, apparently executed in a very coarse taille douce upon white paper, brilliantly if not harmoniously coloured; framed, in what may be termed, cabbage-rose wood, so vividly red and shining is it, and duly glazed. There is, of course, the late Czar Nicholas—one of the portraits taken of him about twenty years since—when his admirers delighted in describing him as an Apollo with the bearing of Jupiter, and the strings of his lyre twisted into thunderbolts. When he wore a tremendous cocked hat, shipped fore and aft; that eagle-crowned helmet on the imperial head, with which we became acquainted through the pleasant pages of Punch, was the invention of a French painter, or rather military draughtsman, of whom the Czar was so fond that he could scarcely be prevailed upon to allow him to leave Russia, much less withdraw his silver roubles from the bank—was not adopted till eighteen-forty-six or seven. There is, almost equally, of course, a portrait of another Czar—the White Czar—for whom, though he was their enemy, the Russian people have a singular and almost superstitious admiration. The Malakani, or little wise men of Jalmboff, believed him, forty years since, to be the lion of the valley of Jehoshaphat, sent by Heaven to dethrone the false emperor (the Malakani hold, like many others neither little nor wise, by the illegitimacy of the Romanoffs). There are many thousands, if not millions, of the common Russians, who believe to this day that the secret of the reverses sustained by the holy Russian arms in the Crimea (the reverses themselves, believe me, are, notwithstanding the lies of the Invalide Russe, no secret at home, for thousands of crippled soldiers have gone home to their villages to tell how soundly they were licked in the valley of the Tchernaya), that the secrets of the defeats of Alma and Inkermann and Balaclava, and the Malakhoff, was in the presence among the French hosts of the famous White Czar, miraculously resuscitated, and reigning at this very time over the Ivansoutskis in Paris-Gorod. One need not go as far as Volnoï-Volostchok to find a similar superstition. In the alpine departments of France there are plenty of peasants who believe that the astute gentleman who lives at the Tuileries (when he is at home, which is but seldom) is the self-same conqueror and king whose sweetest music was his horses' hoofs' notes as he galloped into conquered cities; who vanquished at Marengo, and was crowned at Notre Dame, and saw Moscow blaze before his eyes like a pine torch; and ran away from Waterloo, and died upon the rock; and did the work of forty centuries in but fifty-two years of the Pyramids' brick life.

The third picture, and the third whose presence here is still a matter of course (for the loyalty of the present must be satisfied as well as that of the past) is a portrait of the reigning Czar. His Alexandrian majesty is represented in the act of reviewing his doughty and faithful Preobajinski Guards. The emperor and his guard are drawn upon about the same size of relative grandeur as Garagantua and his courtiers in the illustrations to Rabelais, by the incomparable M. Gustave Doré. The emperor, according to the laws of Brook Taylor's Perspective (which, not being in the forty-five volumes of the Russian code,

must, consequently, be held utterly heretical, schismatic, and abominable) is about twenty-five feet high. The Preobajinskis are about two relative inches in stature, horses and all. The emperor is charging very fiercely over their heads; he is waving a tremendous sword, and the plumes of his helmet are blowing to all the four points of the compass at once. His toes are manfully turned in, and his sinister thumb turned out, so that with his imperial head screwed a little obliquely, he looks not unlike Saint Nicholas in a field-marshal's uniform. Were the sword only a bâton, an ecclesiastical Punch would be nearer the mark. The gallant Preobajinskis—or rather their horses—are all standing manfully on their hind legs; and the patriotic artist — a Moscow man — has artfully depicted their mouths all wide open, so as to leave you no room for doubt that they are crying, "Long live the Czar!" as with one throat. There is a brilliant cortège of princes and generals behind the Czar; and one of the grand dukes—Constantine, I imagine — is holding an eyeglass like a transparent warming-pan, to his archducal optic. I don't think that the Russian artist means to imply by this that his imperial highness is either short-sighted or affected; but, an eye-glass or lorgnottsz, is held to be a great sign of "civlation" in Russia—almost as choice a specimen of the Persicos apparatus as a Moscow Madamsky, or French-milliner-made bonnet.

One word about the Preobajinski Guards, before I finish with number three. I have read lately that they form a regiment of men with cocked-up noses, and that every soldier of a certain height and with a nez retroussé is sent into this corps. This is one of the stock stories with which the witty and wily Russians cram foreigners who go about with open ears and note-books; and they so cram them, I believe, with a mischievous view to the said foreigners afterwards printing these cock-and-bull stories, and so making themselves ridiculous, and their testimony unworthy of credit. There are some eighty thousand men in the Russian Guards up to the Preobajinski standard height; and I think I am giving an under estimate, when I say that forty thousand of them have cocked-up noses. It must be remembered that forty thousand Russian soldiers are as much alike as forty thousand peas, and that the cocked-up nose is the national nose. There is much truth, however, in the story: that great pains are taken in all the regiments of the Guards to match the men as much as possible in personal appearance by companies and battalions. Thus you will see the blue-eyed men filed together, the light moustached men, the blue-bearded men, the small-footed men, and so on; but to send up all the tall men with cocked-up noses into the Preobajinski regiment would be very much like sending every Englishman who wears a white neckcloth to be waiter at the Bedford Hotel. Preobajinski means Transfiguration. The so-called Guards received their name from the Palace of Preobajinski, for whose defence they were first incorporated, and which was a favourite residence of Peter the Great.

With picture number four, I have done with this Volnoï Volotschok Louvre; or more properly National Gallery of Art, for the fourth tableau is eminently national. The scene depicted, is one of the episodes of the late war, in which the Russians were so signally and uniformly victorious. Scene, a Russian church somewhere—very small and trim—a sort of holy front parlour filled with saints, and with striped curtains to the windows, neatly festooned. Dramatis personæ: a band of terrible Turks, with huge turbans and baggy breeches — quite the March in Bluebeard Turks—the magnificent three-tailed bashaw Turks, not the sallow men with the tight coats and fezzes whom we are accustomed to. These ruthless Osmanlis have broken into the church, smashed the windows, pulled down the curtains, desecrated the altar, disfigured the saints, and massacred the pope or priest, who, in full canonicals, with a murderous sword sticking up perpendicularly from his collar-bone, lies with his head in a tall candlestick, and his feet towards the door. But the miscreant pork-repudiators have reckoned without their host. Behold the eleventh of the line—the Russian line—who have come to the rescue, and who turn the tables on the Turks in the most signal manner! Behold a whiskered Muscovite warrior, not dusting a Turk's jacket, but making eyelet holes in it with his good bayonet as the unbeliever tries to disfigure more saints. Behold another miserable Osmanli, his turban off, and his bare pate exposed, prostrate, and crying peccavi: suing for any infinitesimal fraction of quarter, while a zealous grenadier is rapidly sepding him to perdition, by the favourite Russian process of dashing out his brains with the butt-end of his musket. Quarter, indeed! I marvel much where it was, where the Turks desecrated the church. Was it in the same part of Terra incognita in which the English officer was beaten by a Russian market-woman for attempting to steal a goose, and in which fifteen Anglisky mariners and a captain rifled a Moujik's house of a calf, a kakoshnik, and fifteen pewter spoons—both favourite subjects of delineation with the Russians? There are two little features of detail in this picture which I must mention, as they strike me as being very curious. Half-shattered on the floor of the church, there lies a large image of a black Virgin and Child—negro black, with thick lips. How came this, I wonder, into the Græco-Sclavonic archæology? And the rays from the lighted candles are made to resemble the aureoles or golden glories round the heads of the saints, and are ornamented with intricate geometrical engine-

turnings. Any one who watches the outward religious practices of the Russians will be apt to consider them to be candle, if not fire-worshippers; so intimately are devotion and candle-grease mingled in their visible worship; but be it as it may, the glory-headed candles strike me as being so purely Byzantine, that I cannot refrain from recommending them to the notice of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. I should very much like to see Mr. Dante Rosetti's notion of a dark lantern in that state of ornamentation. Whether the Russians eat candles or not, is still a moot point; but it is certain that vast numbers of the priests live upon candles. The subvention allowed them by the government is so miserably small, that but from the revenue they derive from the sale of votive candles, many of them must inevitably starve.

Saving these four pictures, and the saint's image, which last is the precious jewel in the head of this toad-like place, there is no other evidence of attempts to sacrifice to the graces, in the Starosta's house. Every other article of furniture is of the commonest, coarsest, rudest, wigwamiest description. The rotten door swings on leathern hinges, or strips of raw hide rather, like that of the watch tower. There is a table formed of two long fir-planks resting upon massive tressels. There is a scanty square of dirty leather on it, which I presume serves as table-cloth, and on which our samovar now rests. This tressel table has a most hideous resemblance to the high bench platform you see in a parish deadhouse; and I am horrified by the coincidence, when Alexis tells me that when a man dies in these parts his corpse is laid on the table to be howled over, and that to say that "Ivan is on the table" is synonymous, in popular parlance, with saying that Ivan is dead. I want to be off from the Starosta's house immediately after this; but, Alexis (who is the laziest young cub between here and Npookhopersk), won't hear of it, and says that the horses haven't had half enough rest yet; so I continue my inventory. All round the Balschoï-Isba there runs a low wide bench, contrived a double debt to pay; for the surplus members of the family, for whom there is no room in the family-vault bed, lounge on the bench by day, and sleep on it by night. I wish I knew what there was in the churchwarden's pew behind the partition. More beds? Alexis thinks not. The Starosta's riches, perhaps. Will Alexis ask? Alexis asks, or says that he does, and listens to a voluble explanation on the part of the Starosta, with a desperate attempt at an expression of wisdom in his large face; but, when I ask him for a translation, he says it doesn't matter; and I have a worse opinion of his Russ than ever.

Alexis is sitting in a malformed Chinese puzzle on a large scale of timber once painted green, and which was once, to the Starosta's great pride, a garden chair belonging to the absentee, M. de Katorichassoff. I, with my usual selfishness and disregard for the feelings of others (I have the best teacup, too), have usurped an old, long, low, dormeuse fauteuil of grey Utrecht velvet (the dearly-beloved furniture covering of the Russians—Vloursky they call it, par excellence), which from age and maltreatment resembles in its black and tawny bundlings nothing half so much as the skin of an incorrigible old Tom, who has had rather a bad night of it on the tiles. Still, if the old chair had four legs instead of three, it would be a very comfortable old chair. There are no other chairs, no other seats, save the bench, and that offered—if it be not too sacred a thing to sit down upon—by that vast chest of wood painted black, in the corner.

This chest has a formidable iron hasp, and a padlock almost as big as a knocker, and is further braced with iron bands. It is also screwed to the floor, I have no doubt. It is the sort of chest that Sindbad the sailor might have taken with him on his voyages, or that the piratical merman in Washington Irving's delightful Knickerbockeriana might have floated away on in the storm. It is a chest that I should like to fill with dollars, and sprawl at full length upon till death came for change for a three-score-and-ten pound note. It is such a chest as might have served for the pièce de resistance in the Mistletoe Bough tragedy—if this were a baron's hall instead of a Russian Moujik's hut, and if a Russian baron's retainers were ever blithe and gay, or kept Christmas holiday.

I suppose that in this chest the Starosta keeps his discharge from the army—he served fifty years since, and was at the Borodino—which he cannot read, but whose big black eagle he is never tired of admiring. Likewise, the Sonnik, or Russian Interpreter of Dreams, coarsely printed at Kieff on grey paper, and illustrated with glaring daubs, whose letter-press is likewise Chaldee to him, but which he causes one of his son's wives who can read (she was a lady's-maid once) to spell over to him occasionally. The interpretations do not stand him in very valuable stead, certainly, for he has generally forgotten the dreams themselves before he has vicarious recourse to the dream-book. Laid up within the recesses of this monstrous chest, not in lavender, but in a blue cotton pocket-handkerchief well impregnated with mahorka, is the Starosta's blue cloth caftan of state—a robe only worn on the most solemn and jubilatory occasions, such as one of the angel's visits (so few and far between are they) of the lord of the manor to his lands, or the great ecclesiastical fêtes of the egg-eating Easter, and the peppermint brandy moistened Assumption. This caftan is an ample robe, possibly of genuine indigo-dyed English broadcloth, which would be worth at

Leeds or Bradford, its birthplace, perhaps fifty shillings; but for which the Starosta has paid at the fair of Wishnoï-Woloschtchok (which you are not, by any means, to confound with my Volnoï) as much as one hundred roubles in paper assignations, or twenty-five in silver—a matter of four pounds English. There are real silver buttons to it, and it is lined with silk, and encircled by the gold and silver-embroidered girdle which, carefully wrapped in tissue-paper, lies beside it; it is a very swellish and dashing garment. His Starostaship's ordinary or work-a-day costume is a long loose coat of coarse grey frieze—very Irish in texture, though not in fashion; and a bell-crowned hat—we have not yet seen it on his head, though—decidedly Irish, both in material and make. The sash is of gaudy colours, but of the coarsest cotton fabric: purchased at the Gostinnoï-Dvor of Twer, most likely, and manufactured in the sham Manchester mill of some seigneur anxious to increase his revenues by cotton-lordism. Was there ever such a land of contradictions as this Muscovy? Our heaven-born aristocracy, or at least their great majority, think trade and manufactures derogatory to the pearls and velvet of their coronets. It is a standing joke with us that we have one peer of the realm who has so far forgotten his dignity as to be a coal-merchant, and another who is a tin-man. Yet the Russian aristocracy, incomparably the proudest in the world, do not think it a slur on their dignity to work cotton-factories, soap-boiling establishments, sugar-bakeries, candle-manufactories, tanneries, and iron-foundries. Imagine "Norfolk, Westminster, and Co., bone-boilers, Vauxhall, London!"

In this trunk of suppositions the wealthy Starosta has—sing it O choir of Westminster Abbey!—three shirts of three different colours; the red, white, and blue; but he wears them not. No; wary old man! He keeps them against the day when Sophron, the oily drunkard shall be married, or some one other of his numerous grand-children shall enter into the wedded state. There is, actually and politically, a considerable infusion of communism in the rival institutions of this incoherent nightmare country; and, as regards garments, the doctrines of Messieurs Proudhon and Robert Owen are astonishingly prevalent among the common people. The fable of the two friends who had but one coat, hat, and addenda between them is realised here. Sons wear their fathers' shirts, and grandsires their grandsons' hats. The socialism as regards boots is wonderful. The peasant lasses wear the peasant lads' boots habitually (not as a task allotted to a subjugated sex, of wearing the new boots easy for the men folk to walk in, but turn and turn about. If Vacil be at home, Tatiana goes to the fields in Vacil's upper-leathers, and vice versâ.) Very frequently there are but two pairs of boots to a very numerous family, and great economy is necessarily observed in wearing them. You may often see, even in the suburbs of Petersburg and Moscow, gangs of peasant girls and young men returning from the day's work, the comeliest and strongest wearing their family boots, the others shod either with the ordinary lapti, or bark-basket shoes, or going altogether bare-foot. If it be rainy weather, the much-prized family boots are carried slung crosswise over the shoulders. No Vacil or Tatiana dare, for his or her life, run the risk of injuring the paternal slippers by contact with mud, or water. The result, on the return to the paternal hovel, would be such a fearful application of leather — not boot-leather, but of a thinner and more flexible description, and not to the feet, as would cause Vacil to howl, and Tatiana to cry her not very handsome eyes out. A bran new pair of boots are to a Russian a prize of infinite value. I have seen a Moujik, or an Ischvostchik, who has been able to treat himself to such a luxury, for the first time in two years, perhaps, lying on a bench, or—and this is just as likely—on the ground, with his new booted legs, raised high above his head against a wall, contemplating their newness, toughness, and thickness, and inhaling their villanous odour with the half-drowsy, half-delirious mansuetude of an opium-eater of the Theriarki-Tcharchi, over his fifth pipe.

The Starosta must have a fur robe, too, in this chest; as well as those filthy sheepskins which lie on the top of the stove. It must be a foxskin schouba; or, perhaps, a brown-bearskin, originally the property of a very grisly customer of that ilk, shot in a Carelian forest, by one of his sons while on a hunting excursion with his noble Barynn, and which he, having been miserably hugged, clawed, and mangled in the ursine strife, was graciously allowed to keep. And, finally, in this chest of chests, there is a leathern bag full of copper copecks, and odd pieces of the strangest and most ancient coins the Starosta has been able, in the course of a long life-time, to collect. The Russians, high and low, have a curious and decided turn for numismatics. There is scarcely a gentleman of any pretensions to taste, who does not possess something like a cabinet of rare and antique coins and medals; and I have seen in some merchants' leather-bag collections, such weird, barbaric, dark age moneys and tokens, as would make the eyes of the curators of our museums to twinkle, and their mouths to water.

This is the house of the Starosta. After all, I might have given a very lucid idea of a Russian peasant's house, by repeating a succinct description given me by a certain young Russian, soon after my arrival in St. Petersburg. "A Moujik's house," he said, "is dark, and made of wood; the floor is grey; the walls are grey, and the roof is grey; you can cut the

smell of oily fish and cabbage-soup with a hatchet, and at night you can hear the bugs bark." (Vous entendrez aboyer les punaises.)

CYRANO DE BERGERAC.

The position occupied by Cyrano de Bergerac in literary history is the reverse of eminent. When people write about the Gulliver's Travels of Swift, they sometimes set down certain imaginary voyages of one Cyrano de Bergerac as likely to have suggested to the sarcastic dean the notion of doing something else on a similar plan; and this hypothesis is invariably followed by the assertion that, if it be true, the imitation far surpassed the original. Cyrano de Bergerac receives about the same degree of honour which is awarded to the falling apple that set Sir Isaac Newton a-thinking about the theory of gravitation. Cyrano de Bergerac set Dean Swift a-thinking: thus he fulfilled his mission, so there is an end of Cyrano de Bergerac.

Under these circumstances, if anybody dwells on Cyrano's name long enough to think at all about it, beyond remarking that it is somewhat singular and imposing, he will doubtless make up his mind that the said Cyrano wrote an exceedingly stupid book, destined, as a matter of course, to be excelled by the productions of later wits. Now, it is precisely this impression that we hope to remove by the present article. We hope to make some people believe that Cyrano de Bergerac deserves a better position than one which fluctuates between absolute oblivion and an unhonoured post in the rank and file of literature, and that his book is well worthy the slight trouble of a perusal. It is not only not stupid, but it is exceedingly amusing and clever. The great portion of it is marked by that tone of vraisemblance that renders Gulliver's Tales so attractive; the incidents are far more varied and ingenious than in that celebrated work; the satire against social prejudices and conventions is equally penetrating and sometimes equally cynical. Let us add, that Cyrano's book possesses a charm for the intellectual reader to which there is nothing corresponding in Swift—namely, a reverence for science, manifested throughout. For the bulk of mankind he shows, perhaps, little more respect than Swift for the Yahoos; but with science he plays lovingly. With the Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms, he would probably have sympathised but not with the Voyage to Laputa, with its comprehensive sneer, spreading over, not only speculative philosophy but practical science. He flourished at an epoch when natural science was in its first dawn, when all the thinkers of the age were inspired by Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, and Gassendi; and his book clearly betokens a mind that hailed the advancing light, albeit disposed to regard the new revelations in a fantastic spirit. Though he constructs marvels with the facility of a Munchausen, and with the same regard for the relations of cause and effect, which thus become ridiculous from the absurdities for which they are forced to account, he leaves no doubt in his reader's mind that he seriously believes in the Epicurean system, in a plurality of worlds, and in the atomic theory, propounded in his day by Gassendi, and that he has some crude notions of the theory of attraction, afterwards perfected by Newton. Indeed, it is hard not to surmise that the diffusion of scientific truths in an amusing form was one of the objects of his book.

Before proceeding to the work itself, we may as well dispose of a question, which doubtless has been suggested to some of our readers by the title of this article—Who was Cyrano de Bergerac? To this question we reply that Savinien Cyrano de Bergerac (that's his full name) was an officer in the French service, born at the Château de Bergerac, in the Perigord, about the year sixteen hundred and twenty, and especially distinguished as a reckless duellist. Wounded at the siege of Arras in sixteen hundred and forty-one, he is said to have quitted the service, and to have devoted himself to the study of philosophy, forcing himself by sheer intimidation into a class taught by Gassendi. In sixteen hundred and fifty-five, at the early age of thirty-five, he died in consequence of an accident, leaving behind him the reputation of a penitent atheist. His literary celebrity during his lifetime was based upon a tragedy called Agrippine, and a comedy entitled Le Pédant Joué, singular as the first play in which a provincial dialect was ever introduced upon the Parisian stage. The Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon, and the Comical History of the States and Empire of the Sun, were published after his death by his friend, M. Lebret. To these, which form one continuous narrative, we now proceed without further introduction.

The record of Cyrano's Voyage to the Moon commences with the short report of a discussion between himself and a party of gay companions as to the nature of the satellite. He is laughed to scorn, when he maintains the opinion that the moon is inhabited; but is confirmed in his belief by the discovery on his table of a volume of Cardan, in which the same doctrine is asserted in the testimony of two mysterious old men, who paid the philosopher a supernatural visit. Not satisfied, however, with mere theory, he resolves to inspect the moon in person; and to this end he fastens round about him a number of vials filled with dew, which, rising into the air, under the influence of the morning-sun, lift him high above the earth, but in a wrong direction, for the moon appears farther off than ever. To prevent further continuance in the wrong path, he breaks several of the

vials and descends to the earth, where, to his astonishment, there is every appearance of noon-day; although, according to his own computation, it ought to be midnight. The enigma is solved by the discovery that he is in Canada, the earth having accomplished a partial revolution beneath his feet, while he was suspended in mid-air. Here he is brought before the viceroy, who gives him a hospitable reception, and enters into a discussion on the solar system, in which Cyrano maintains the modern theory, which places the sun in the centre.

The argument is carried on, not in an abstruse manner, but by a constant appeal to common sense, and by allusions of the most popular kind. To suppose that the great luminary turned round such an insignificant point as the earth, is as absurd as to believe that a grate revolves to roast a lark; and, as for the hypothesis, that the sun merely exists for the use of terrestrial man, we ought rather to think that we catch rays destined for higher purposes, just as a low fellow in the street may accidentally be lighted by the king's torch.

The notion of visiting the moon is not abandoned, and Cyrano now constructs a machine, which he does not closely describe, but in which a spring seems to be the most important element. His first essay proves unfortunate; he gets a severe tumble, which obliges him to return to his lodging and rub himself over with beef-marrow, as a remedy for his bruises; and what is still worse, the machine is picked up by some soldiers, who conceive that by surrounding it with fusees they may use it as a gigantic rocket, which will have all the appearance of a flying-dragon. Just as a soldier is lighting one of the fusees in the principal square of Quebec, the outraged machine is discovered by its lawful master, who jumps into it, with the intention of tearing off the combustibles. Too late! The fireworks at once take him up into the clouds, and he has all the horror of ascending in the midst of a general combustion.

Strange to say, after the fusees have burned out, and the machine has fallen from him, he still continues rising. It is the moon that now attracts him, by her action on the beef-marrow; and, after another violent fall, he finds himself under one of the lunar trees, not materially injured by his voyage.

The landscape which meets his gaze, fills him with admiration, and affords him an opportunity of dilating upon the picturesque objects that do not differ from those of the earth, save by their superior beauty. The first person he meets, is a young man, who is, like himself, a traveller from the sublunar region, but who has accomplished his voyage by means far more ingenious than either of those devised by Cyrano. Having first taken a loadstone—two feet square—he extracted its essence, and formed of it a moderately sized ball. Then seating himself in a machine of iron, he threw the ball as high as he could, and at once it drew up the machine, till it was again in his hands. A series of throws bringing him nearer and nearer to the moon, he at last reached its surface, having taken extra precautions to break his fall at the last stage. Through all the author's extravagancies the notion of attraction seems ever uppermost in his mind.

The episode of the young traveller comes to an abrupt conclusion, and Cyrano next meets two inhabitants of the moon, who differ from sublunar men by their colossal stature (twelve cubits is their average height) and the custom of walking on all-fours. Being taken to the nearest town, he is confided to the care of a citizen, who is accustomed to keep rare animals, and who, delighted with the possession of so extraordinary a dwarf, makes him perform all sorts of tricks, and exhibits him to the public for a pecuniary consideration. From this degrading situation poor Cyrano is delivered by a singular personage, who accosts him in Greek, and is no other than the ci-devant Genius of Socrates, who, being a native of the sun, visits the moon and earth at pleasure. Instructed by the king, who wishes to see the dwarf at court, the demon dons the form of an athletic young man, who has just died in a hospital, and, adopting the normal fashion of walking upon all-fours, carries Cyrano on his back to an inn, where he is to await the royal pleasure. Here he is surprised with a sort of Barmecide repast. Seated at a table, on which no sort of comestible is apparent, he asks for some soup, when the room is at once filled with a most savoury odour. The request of the courteous demon that he will finish his soup, and take something else, ruffles his temper, and "Where the d—— is the soup?" is his not unnatural ejaculation. He is now informed that the inhabitants of the moon live exclusively on steam, and that the whole art of cooking consists in the collection of a variety of delicious exhalations within large vessels, which are opened in accordance with the varying taste of the lunar bon-vivants. In spite of this explanation, Cyrano desires more substantial fare, and a dozen of larks are accordingly shot with a composition that kills and roasts them at the same moment. The currency of the country is as light as the food, consisting of copies of verses submitted to the judgment of the Mint, and valued according to a tariff of merit. Hence, a poet is always rich, and blockheads alone die of starvation. A sonnet covers the expenses of two persons at a respectable hotel for an entire week.

By order of the king, Cyrano is no sooner presented at court, than he is given as a companion to a Spanish gentleman, who has come to the moon to escape from the Inquisition in his own country, and is kept by the queen as

an ape. This Castilian is a supporter of the atomic theory, and his discourses with his fellow captive on the subject of atoms and a vacuum, are in the spirit of Lucretius. The author here is no longer the fantastic novelist, but the zealous disciple of Gassendi.

The presence in the kingdom of two beings, human in shape, diminutive in stature, and biped by habit or nature, not only causes a great commotion in the multitude, but produces a schism among the learned, and the question, whether Cyrano and his friend are really to be deemed human or not, is the leading topic of the day. The old assertion, that man by holding his head erect demonstrates his superiority to the brutes has ever been a favourite common-place. Hence there is humour as well as ingenuity in the argument used by the orthodox lunar party, who would disprove the humanity of the two terrestrials, on the ground of their biped condition. "Only look how they lift their heads towards heaven; the universal privation they endure is the cause of this position, by which they lament to heaven that they were born, and request permission to partake of our leavings. But we—we have our heads directed downwards that we may contemplate the wealth that we possess, in the full conviction that there is nothing above us to be desired in our present happy condition." Again: "We walk on all-fours, because beings so precious could not be trusted to a less firm position; we rest upon four pillars that we may not fall. But, as for these two brutes, nature has only placed them on two paws, deeming the preservation of such paltry things unworthy of her solicitude."

The discussions that arise as to the true character of the extraordinary dwarfs, are deemed so dangerous to the public faith, that a decree is issued declaring that Cyrano is simply a bird without feathers, and he is consequently put into a cage. Here, from the concourse of visitors, he gradually learns the language of the people, and displays so much wit, that a new decree is necessary to declare that these signs of intellect are to be attributed to no higher source than animal instinct. These official measures do not curb the spirit of faction; the party in favour of Cyrano increases in strength; his condition is examined anew; and, at last, through the exertions of hostile savans he is formally brought to trial, for the impious assertion, that the moon from which he came is a world, and that the world on which he stands is only a moon. A death by drowning is the punishment proper to offences of the sort, but Cyrano is saved by the arguments of a wise advocate, who contends that if the prisoner is a man, he has a right to freedom of thought; if he is a brute, he has merely spoken by native instinct, and cannot be regarded as a criminal. The first of these positions enables the author to inculcate religious toleration and scientific freedom in a manner that, in his day, was considered audacious. The advocate proves afterwards to be Cyrano's old friend, the Demon of Socrates, who has put on this new shape to effect his deliverance.

With the liberation of Cyrano, who is, however, forced to make a public recantation of his heresies, his adventures in the moon conclude, and the rest of his sojourn is chiefly occupied with a record of the theories propounded by divers lunar sages. These are, for the most part, startling paradoxes, maintained in a style that renders it sometimes difficult to discover whether the author is in jest or earnest. Youth is declared to be more worthy of respect than age; the duty of child to parent is explained away, with a cynicism which anticipates Swift; and the cruelty of cutting live cabbages is exposed in a florid strain of virtuous indignation:—"Do you not believe, in truth, that if this plant could speak when it was cut, it would say: 'Man—my dear brother, what have I done to merit death? I only grow in gardens; I am never found in a savage place, where I might live in security; I scorn all society but thine. Scarcely am I planted, in thy garden, than, to show my kindly feeling, I expand—I open my arms. I offer thee my children in the grain; and thou repayest my kindness by cutting off my head.' This is the discourse, that the cabbage would hold, if it had the command of words. Well, then. Because it is unable to complain are we justified in doing it all the mischief that it cannot prevent? If I find a miserable wretch bound, can I, without a crime, kill him because he is unable to defend himself? Perhaps a cabbage possesses an universal intellect; a perfect knowledge of all things. Perhaps for this very reason, it has been provided, not with organs like ours—like those of creatures who are endowed with a weak and fallible reason—but with others, more ingeniously elaborated, stronger, and more numerous; with which it carries on its high speculations."

A desire to return to earth having taken possession of Cyrano, he is carried back by the friendly demon, who sets him down at his own request in the neighbourhood of Rome. No sooner has he touched terra firma than he is assailed by dogs, with a ferocity for which he cannot, at first, account. At last he recollects that dogs are in the habit of baying at the moon, and conjectures that the smell of the moon fresh upon him, has been detected by the canine nostril. By lying for some hours in the sun he removes this inconvenience; the dogs bark at him no longer: and after having gratified his curiosity by viewing the wonders of Rome, he sets sail for his own country.

So ends the first of his two books. The second commences with his arrival in France, when he publishes the narrative of his lunar expedition, and at once becomes a literary lion. Soon, however, admiration for his genius degenerates into a suspicion that he is

a wizard, and he is consequently lodged in the prison of Toulon. Through the intervention of powerful friends he is, nevertheless, allowed to amuse himself in his own way, and he employs his time in the construction of a new machine. This consists of a large box with an aperture at the top and bottom, and a hollow crystal globe, likewise with an aperture, which is fitted closely to the opening at the top of the box. The globe is moreover cut into facets, which, like so many lenses, are capable of concentrating the rays of the sun in the interior of the machine. Placing this machine on the terrace of his prison, and seating himself within, he soon finds the city of Toulon disappear beneath his feet. The rays of the sun have, as he had purposed, created a vacuum within the globe, and the external air rushing in through the nether aperture to supply the void, has lifted him up with its violence, so that he is once more an aërial traveller. After floating for four months in the higher regions without taking food or feeling hunger (for his proximity to the sun, increasing the supply of radical heat, has rendered other nutrition unnecessary), he alights on a solar spot, which is a world in itself, and meets a little man, who discourses with him in a language which he has never heard before, but of which, nevertheless, he can understand every word. This language is an ideal tongue, in which words exactly correspond to the things signified, and therefore every rational being can comprehend it by a sort of instinct. After hearing from the little man a grave discourse on the origin of the world, Cyrano proceeds on his voyage, and, approaching still nearer to the sun, is astonished to find that the machine has suddenly disappeared, and that he is floating along surrounded by nothing but sky. However, when he stretches out his arms, he comes into contact with an unseen obstacle, and when he looks at his own body, his heart, liver, and lungs are visible. The mystery is now solved:—he is still in the machine as before, but the sun, with its natural tendency to purify matter from its opacity, has rendered it so completely transparent that it is no longer an object of vision. On living things the action of the sun is less powerful; and hence his own frame is only rendered sufficiently transparent to allow of the internal revelations before mentioned. Through the increased rarefaction of the air, there now seems considerable danger that the sun will never be reached; for, only a slight breeze, scarcely sufficient to sustain the traveller, enters the lower aperture of the box. However, such is the influence of the will on the body in these sublime regions, that the mere desire to touch the parent of light draws Cyrano towards his goal; and, pressing against the interior of the box, he forces it along with him. Weary of the machine which has now become an incumbrance, he feels for the door, opens it, and gets out; but, in so doing, accidentally breaks the crystal globe. A noise like thunder ensues; the machine falls by its own weight, and Cyrano sees it in its descent; for, it naturally passes through those lower regions, in which matter becomes opaque.

Two and twenty months have elapsed since Cyrano's departure from Toulon, when he sets his foot on the luminous plains of the sun, where flakes of burning snow seem to compose the soil. It is a peculiarity of this new world that he is equally at his ease in any attitude. Whether he walks on his feet, or on his head; whether he stands on his ear or his elbow, he always feels upright. This phenomenon may easily be explained: The sun is a world without a centre, and as weight is nothing but the attraction of a body to the centre, a body on the surface of the sun is naturally without weight. How marvellously are truth and fallacy mixed up together in this argument!

After much wandering, Cyrano finds himself at the foot of a tree with a golden trunk, silver branches, and flowers, and leaves composed of precious stones. While his eyes are fixed upon a pomegranate, that is a mass of rubies, and his ears are regaled by the song of a nightingale seated in the tree, a little head issues from the fruit, and presently a diminutive form begins gradually to manifest itself, until its full development being attained, it drops at his feet, a perfect human being, no taller than his thumb. The astonishment awakened by this marvel is increased by the solution of the entire tree into a multitude of tiny men of whom the humanised pomegranate is king. These execute a furious dance, their movements being so rapid that it soon becomes impossible to discern their individual forms, till at last they are all massed together so as to form a young man of middle size. Some English readers may possibly be reminded of the curious figure in the frontispiece to Hobbe's Leviathan.

The middle-sized young man remains destitute of animation until the little king jumps down his throat, when he explains the extraordinary proceedings that have taken place before the eyes of the wondering traveller. The people, whom he has just seen, are inhabitants of the brighter parts of the sun, who, to amuse themselves by travelling, have, in the first instance, taken the form of eagles: the king becoming a nightingale, to recreate them with his song. On their route they have met with a nightingale of the darker regions, who has contracted such an affection for the metamorphosed king, that it is impossible to get rid of her without going through a series of transformations, to prove that the beloved object is of a species superior to her own. The tree, which first attracted the attention of the traveller, was the last transformation of the sun; and the nightingale, who, being a real nightingale,

remains unchanged, has agreed to return to her home, in the darker regions.

This explanation being given, the little king, resuming the form of a nightingale, flies out of the mouth of the speaker, who at once resolves himself into a number of eagles. In this transformation there is nothing supernatural. The inhabitants of the brighter regions of the sun are endowed with such a strong imagination, and with such a subtle frame, that the latter is completely under the rule of the former, which arranges every material particle at pleasure. What can be more natural?

By following the course of the eagles, Cyrano at last finds himself in the Land of Birds, which is situated in the darker part of the sun. Here he is made prisoner by the feathered inhabitants, and tried, as a member of the human race, so long notorious for its cruelty to birds. The strong opinion entertained in this country of the inferiority of man, allows the author an opportunity of indulging in that species of cynicism which afterwards found its most odious expression in Gulliver's description of the Yahoos. "If man," says a philosophical bird, "was an animal only a little more similar to ourselves, something might be said. But nothing could be more dissimilar; and he is, besides, the ugliest of creatures,—a beast without a natural coat, a plucked bird; in a word, a chimera, formed by an amalgamation of every species of being, and alike repugnant to them all. Man, forsooth! A creature so foolish and so vain, as to persuade himself that we were made for his use! Man, who, with his penetrating intellect, cannot distinguish between sugar and arsenic, and who will swallow hemlock, which his acute judgment has made him take for parsley! Man, who contends that reasoning cannot be carried on without the aid of the senses, and who, nevertheless, has senses weaker, slower, and more fallacious than those of any creature whatever! Man, in fine, whom Nature, in her universality, has created as a monster, and into whom she has, moreover, infused the ambition of ruling all other animals!"

At the suggestion of a friendly magpie, who recollects the savoury cheeses she used to eat when dwelling in the habitations of man, Cyrano attempts to persuade his judges that he is an ape. He is at once consigned to the care of certain officers, who are required to examine into the truth of this allegation. A number of birds, with nutshells on their heads, go through all sorts of fantastic antics in his presence, and at last disappear altogether, without giving any explanation of their eccentricities. When the trial is resumed, their object becomes but too evident. The officers report that various tricks have been played before the prisoner, which he would certainly have imitated if he had been an ape; but, that as he did not imitate them, he is clearly not above the condition of humanity. After much pleading, he is condemned to be devoured by insects, and, on arriving at the place of execution, is held fast to a tree by four herons, who twist their long necks about his arms and legs. However, just at the critical moment, two turtle-doves bring the welcome news of a pardon, and he is carried into the presence of the king on the back of a white ostrich. A parrot, whom he once set at liberty in France, and in whose presence he has often maintained the opinion that birds were rational beings, has recognised him, and has reported these favourable facts to the king. Hence, life and liberty are immediately accorded. The government of the birds is altogether of a mild character. The royal dignity popularly assigned to the eagle is a mere human blunder. The most pacific birds are alone entrusted with the sovereign power, and, during the period of Cyrano's visit, the reigning monarch is a dove.

When he quits the land of birds, the book completely changes its character. He finds himself, in the first place, in a wood of talking trees, sprung from an acorn, which, ages before, was brought by an eagle from Dodona, and hears an origin of love which may remind the erudite of the theory assigned to Aristophanes in the Symposium of Plato. Then he comes to five fountains, which represent the five senses, and supply three rivers, called, Memory, Judgment, and Imagination, evidently after the division of Bacon. There is also a land of philosophers; for the choicer spirits of humanity have their appointed residences in the sun; and the newest arrival is that of M. Descartes.

An ingenious tale of wonder has thus degenerated into a frigid allegory; hence the reader is not sorry when the travels of Cyrano abruptly terminate with his introduction to the great thinker of France.

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A PETTY PROTECTOR.

PERHAPS there never occurred a smaller revolution—to be a real revolution—than that by which Jorgen Jorgenson was elevated to the Protectorate of Iceland. Jorgenson is the very least of all the Cromwells.

This remarkably insignificant man was born at Copenhagen, seventy-seven years ago. His father was clockmaker to the court of Denmark. His elder brother wrote a book upon the measurement of time; his brother's son, still living, is a famous watchmaker, and has written books in Danish, French, German, and English, about watches and chronometers. These are all honourable men; but Jorgen was ambitious. Jorgen may not have been considered a youth likely to maintain the credit of his family, or he may have had vagrant propensities of his own early in life; for, early in life he was sent to England and bound to apprenticeship on board a collier. He was—as he says of himself in the preface to a book of travels written in English, and adapted cunningly to the meridian of London—"brought up in the arms of Neptune, and torn from the bosom of his friends at the early age of fourteen." From the collier he passed to the English navy, where, he says, he served as a midshipman; but for these facts, as we have only his own word for them, we are unable to vouch. At twenty-seven he returned to Copenhagen; where he published a small volume in Danish, on the commerce of the English and Americans in the Pacific. He had been to the Pacific in an English ship. Those were war-times, and Jorgen Jorgenson presently set sail from Copenhagen as commander of a Danish privateer, intending to make prizes on the English coast. He was himself, however, taken near Flamborough Head, was sent to London as a prisoner of war, but, being no great prize, left at large on his parole.

Now should come the account of the Icelandic revolution; but we skip over that for a few minutes, to look at a book of Jorgen's writing—the book of "Travels through France and Germany in the years eighteen hundred and fifteen, eighteen hundred and sixteen, and eighteen hundred and seventeen, by J. Jorgenson, Esq.," to which allusion has already been made—and so to get an inkling of this Cromwell's character. We find, then, by his book, that Mr. Jorgenson was quite resolved to derive any advantage that could accrue to himself from the flattery of those persons in England who could do him mischief if they pleased—for he was a prisoner of war not in the least particular about the keeping of parole—and from the most unscrupulous pandering to English prejudice against the French. He tells in his book, that a French general, released after the peace from "his confinement on board a prison-ship in England," had informed the Parisians in a pamphlet that the English ladies retire from table after dinner on the pouring out of the second glass; but that they do so not because of moderation; but because they do not find the port wine so agreeable as the drams that they drink in the drawing-room. The same French general is made by Mr. Jorgenson to assert, that a certain English colonel was led one day from curiosity to visit the prisons in which the French captives were being starved near Portsmouth; that, before entering, the said colonel fastened his horse to one of the iron rails of the main gate, and that, on his return the horse was nowhere to be seen; "on looking down, however, he observed the skin and very clean-scraped bones of a horse lying close at his feet. He now learned, that the poor hungry French prisoners had killed the animal with their knives through the rails of the gate, and had used so much despatch and dexterity on the occasion, that, in less than ten minutes the bones were scraped clean, and the flesh carried away, in order to dress it into fricassees and ragouts." We think we can recognise Jorgenson his mark upon that whole invention. Let us test it by comparison with an undoubted J. J. He happened, he says, to be on a visit one afternoon to a lady of high rank, when a letter arrived "which she perused with the utmost satisfaction, and with the most lively expression of joy in her countenance." It was an invitation to her "great black cat" to partake of an elegant déjeûné to-morrow morning, precisely at ten o'clock, with two other cats of a noble household. At once, and in presence of the visitor, the black cat's company dresses were tried on, "to see what things would best suit her to wear on the

following morning. . . . Four little gloves of the finest kid-skin were first to be put on her four legs, and tied with silk strings. In attempting to do this, the poor servant received a great number of scratches, without daring to utter a word, or even to look displeased. This operation performed, puss was dressed in a short petticoat of white satin trimmed with silver, and a purple robe embroidered with gold. A string of fine pearl was fastened round her neck; while a superb laced cap was placed on her head. Her ladyship surveyed her favourite with looks of the utmost fondness—with such as I have sometimes seen a tender mother gazing on her first-born child. Scarcely could I contain my gravity; but, as I knew very well the distinction which exists between a noble countess and the wife of a tobacco merchant, I contrived to keep myself within due bounds." The "wife of the tobacco merchant" was a person at whose house Mr. Jorgen Jorgenson says that he was a frequent guest; but she was corpulent, and nothing but a tradesman's wife; so that, when she described with illustrative gesture the charms of two English girls with whom the French were smitten, "the caricature before me, provoked a loud and insulting laugh, on my part, which continued for several minutes. Had I been guilty of so much rudeness towards an English lady, I should have been severely checked for my unmannerly behaviour; but here I encountered no such treatment; for Madame ascribed that to the effect of her wit, which certainly proceeded from a very different cause. Curiosity led me to inquire who the two English ladies might be that had appeared with so much éclat at St. Cloud; and I found them to be the daughters of a linendraper in London, who had come over to Paris in search of that which they despaired of procuring at home—I mean, husbands."

Perhaps there is enough here to show the nature of our friend, and help us to a better understanding of the little revolution he effected in the state of Iceland. There was war, it is to be remembered, between England and Denmark. No sooner had he become an English prisoner than he began unscrupulously to consult his own interests by dealing knavishly with his own country; but he dealt knavishly with England, too; for he did not hesitate to break his parole very soon after he had signed it. Supplies from the mother country being the mainstay of the Icelanders, and the arrival of these being much hindered by the war, the people of that island were in a difficult position, and it was proposed by an English merchant (Mr. Phelps), who acted under the advice of Jorgenson, to derive profit from this circumstance by sending a cargo to Reikiavik; bringing home in exchange for it the tallow said to be accumulating in the ports of Iceland, and awaiting opportunity of being taken into Denmark. In January, eighteen hundred and nine, the ship Clarence, with Jorgenson on board (who, as before said, broke his parole by sailing in it), arrived at the capital of Iceland; where, in the absence of Count Tramp, the governor, who chanced to be in Denmark, the authorities abided by the rule that forbade trading with foreigners. The Clarence at first attempted to trade as a neutral under American colours, then showed the British flag—the refusal to trade being persisted in, although the vessel had left England with a letter of marque, that included an express stipulation with the owner that the captain should not seize or capture any vessel, either in the ports of Iceland or in sight of its coasts, on penalty of a forfeiture of eight thousand pounds. The supercargo released the captain from his bond, and seizure was made of a Danish brig, which had arrived from Norway with provisions. You shall not use your own stores, but buy ours, said these Englishmen, under a renegade Dane's counsel, to the subjects of the Dane.

Reikiavik was but a poor little town built chiefly of wood, liable to be destroyed in a few hours by any vessel that would use a gun or two against it; and the destruction of their town in winter time would be a terrible calamity to the poor Icelanders. The local authorities consented, therefore, to a convention which permitted trade between Reikiavik and the Clarence; but the English speculation did not prove very successful, and the Clarence presently went home again in ballast, having Mr. Jorgenson on board.

Early in June Count Tramp, the governor of Iceland, returned to his post. There is abundant reason for believing that he was a man of honour and an educated gentleman. He did not approve of the convention that had been extorted from his people; but, respecting it, confirmed it formally ten days afterwards to the captain of a British sloop of war. Free trade was allowed during the war to British subjects who should visit Iceland and submit themselves, while there, to Danish laws. On the twenty-first of June—two days after the departure of the sloop—there arrived in the harbour of Reikiavik Jorgen Jorgenson again, with Mr. Phelps the merchant, on board a fine ship carrying ten guns—the Margaret and Anne—having also in company a brig—the Flora. The merchant brought, in these two vessels, another cargo. The new-comers waited four days; and, as within that time, they were not sought by the Icelandic traders, they resolved to seize Count Tramp, and to make a prize of the Orion; a brig of his provided with a licence from the British government, and loaded with goods to the value of six thousand dollars, which were about to be distributed gratuitously for the relief of the poor Icelanders. For this seizure, excuse was found by the ingenious Mr. Jorgenson, and so began the revolution, in which, says Sir William Hooker, who described it in

his book of Icelandic travel, "only twelve men were employed, not a life was lost, not a drop of blood was shed, not a gun fired, nor a sabre unsheathed."

On a Sunday afternoon, the captain of the Margaret and Anne landed with twelve men, who are described as mere "invalids," for "it is sufficiently known that, in time of war, the crews of merchant ships consist of such men only as are unfit for the service of his Majesty." The twelve men marched unopposed to the governor's house, took him prisoner; were opposed only by protest that their conduct was illegal; and marched back with him in sight of the inhabitants; of whose "long poles in their hands spiked with iron, which they used for walking upon the snow," and which they did not use for the rescue of the governor, much was said by way of suggesting that the Icelanders were glad to be delivered from oppression. At the same time, there is nothing at all hinted of the guns of the Margaret and Anne within range of the little wooden town.

The Danish authority having been thus put down by a proceeding for which no Englishman in the party cared to make himself prominently responsible, "it was determined that Mr. Jorgenson, not being a subject of the crown of Great Britain, or responsible to it for his actions, should assume for the present the chief command." Jorgen Jorgenson, Esquire, accordingly took whole and sole possession of Count Tramp's house, under the title of Protector of Iceland, and issued a proclamation by which—good son of Denmark!—he declared all Danish authority over the island to be at an end, ordered all Danes to be imprisoned in their houses, and decreed that all who opposed the authority of J. J. should be brought before a military court and shot. The army, out of which this military court was to be raised, consisted of eight men. With that army (and the guns of the ship) Iceland was coerced.

A second proclamation decreed a commonwealth and a protectorate. It annulled also all debts due to Danish merchants, and prohibited clandestine payment of them, "under pain of the individual being compelled to pay the same amount again to the new governor." It also took off, for a season, half the taxes upon Icelanders.

The limitation of the protector's army to eight men was matter of necessity. The houses at Reikiavik had been searched, and no arms found, except twenty or thirty old fowling-pieces—most of them useless—and a few swords and pistols. Eight natives dressed in green uniform, furnished with pistols and swords, and mounted upon good ponies, were sent to scour the country; intimidating the Danes, and making themselves highly useful to the new governor in securing the goods and property that were to be confiscated. In plain truth, they were not an army but a band of robbers; having the protector for their captain. We can take Count Tramp's word for the character of Mr. Jorgenson's Icelandic court, that it was a contemptible band of idle persons and men of ruined fortunes, attracted by his being beyond measure lavish of the sums of money amassed by his plunders, and by the pompous promises that he daily retailed on paper, or held forth in his harangues. All the goods in shops and warehouses belonging to such of his countrymen, the Danes, as were not resident in Iceland, Jorgenson seized and made his own on the first day of his authority, and he sent out his troops on the same errand of robbery to each of the distinct towns. All this was done by "We, Jorgen Jorgenson," under the style and title of "His Excellency, the Protector of Iceland, Commander-in-Chief by sea and land." In the meantime it was a great joy to him to produce proclamations. On the eleventh of July—proclaiming that "We, Jorgen Jorgenson, have taken upon ourselves the government of the country until a regular constitution can be established, with power to make war and conclude peace with foreign potentates"—he stated magnificently that the soldiery (meaning the eight natives in green) had chosen him to be their leader and to conduct the whole military department; that a new flag was appointed for Iceland, which J. J. promised to defend with his life and blood; and the ancient seal of the country was abolished, his own private one being substituted until the representatives of the people fixed upon another. The old Icelandic flag was a split cod-fish surrounded by a garland. The protector substituted for it something obviously finer—three split cod-fish instead of one. To say nothing of confiscations that were robberies, and seizures of vessels that were cunningly excused acts of piracy, the sum of public money seized by Jorgenson, and disbursed in part as salaries to his associates, amounted to about nineteen thousand dollars. It was all spent in two months.

The commander of the next British sloop-of-war that touched at Iceland, received in the August of the same summer at Havnfiord such information as brought the sloop round promptly to Reikiavik; where, all parties having been heard, it was ordered by Captain Jones that Mr. Jorgenson should cease to govern until the will of the English government was known; that the battery which Mr. Jorgenson and Mr. Phelps had set up should be destroyed, and the guns re-shipped; that the army of eight should be disbanded, and accounts of the whole matter laid by the several persons concerned in it before the British government. Count Tramp and Mr. Jorgenson were both taken to England.

Having arrived in London, Mr. Jorgenson went to the Spread Eagle Inn, Gracechurch Street; where he was soon afterwards arrested as a prisoner of war who had twice broken

parole, sent to the Tothill Fields prison, and thence to the hulks at Chatham. After a twelvemonth of rigorous confinement, he was released and again trusted on parole at Reading; where he wrote a book upon the state of Christianity at Otaheite. At the end of the war he set forth as a tourist on foot through France and Germany, and founded that work from which we have already given some extracts, and in which he not only takes mean ways of currying favour with the English generally, but does not forget the conciliatory temper and affable manners of Captain Woodroffe at Portsmouth, and Captain Hutchenson, at Chatham, who were superintendents of the prison-ships, and is piously grieved that such a person as 'General Lefebvre Donenette should violate his parole.

To end the story in a summary way, Mr. Jorgenson, two or three years after his return from travel, was convicted at the Old Bailey of theft from his lodgings in Warren Street, Fitzroy Square, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. After two years he was liberated on condition of exile; but he did not leave England, was again arrested for being unlawfully at large, and condemned to death. His sentence was again commuted. He was an exemplary convict, from whose hand we have a holy book: The Religion of Christ is the Religion of Nature: written in the condemned cells of Newgate, by Jorgen Jorgenson, late Governor of Iceland. In this book he says that he was a sincere Christian till his thirtieth year, when he became an atheist through reading Gibbon's Decline and Fall; and that, from that time, he was lost to all sense of principle till his conversion in Newgate. So the authorities of Newgate made him comfortable. He was kept among them for four years as an assistant in the infirmary; and, at last, sent over to a penal settlement for one-and-twenty years. There ends the known history of this protector. His pious book was published after his departure, as we may reasonably suppose, by the gaol chaplain when he was next in want of a good testimonial, and therein the world learnt from Jorgenson himself how he was "born with the finest affections of the heart and mind; he was highly gifted, and at an early age engaged in an honourable profession, wherein he in a short time acquired competence and reputation. His good temper"—he is in this passage pleasantly dallying with himself in the third person—"his good temper and benevolent disposition," &c., &c., &c. "But, lo! the enemy came and sowed tares in the night. At the age abovenamed, he accidentally met with Gibbon's," &c., &c., &c. All which, the Gentleman's Magazine, closing a review of the book, considers "rather curious than valuable," adding: "The literary labours of historical personages are always interesting, even if less intrinsically valuable than this volume; nor can we imagine a fairer likelihood of fame than his, whose political career will be perpetuated in the annals of his country; whose conversion will secure to him a prominent post in those of religion; and whose arguments will be cited as conclusive in the most important of controversies."

Thus commended, Mr. Jorgenson lived before his time. He should have been a ticket-of-leave man.

THE POOR CLARE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE SECOND.

I NOW come to the time in which I myself was mixed up with the people that I have been writing about. And to make you understand how I became connected with them, I must give you some little account of myself. My father was the younger son of a Devonshire gentleman of moderate property; my eldest uncle succeeded to the estate of his forefathers, my second became an eminent attorney in London, and my father took orders. Like most poor clergymen, he had a large family; and I have no doubt was glad enough when my London uncle, who was a bachelor, offered to take charge of me, and bring me up to be his successor in business.

In this way I came to live in London, in my uncle's house, not far from Gray's Inn, and to be treated and esteemed as his son, and to labour with him in his office. I was very fond of the old gentleman. He was the confidential agent of many country squires, and had attained to his present position as much by knowledge of human nature as by knowledge of law; though he was learned enough in the latter. He used to say his business was law, his pleasure heraldry. With his intimate acquaintance with family history, and all the tragic courses of life therein involved, to hear him talk at leisure times about any coat of arms that came across his path, was as good as a play or a romance. Many cases of disputed property dependent on a love of genealogy, were brought to him, as to a great authority on such points. If the lawyer who came to consult him was young, he would take no fee, only give him a long lecture on the importance of attending to heraldry; if the lawyer was of mature age and good standing, he would mulct him pretty well, and abuse him to me afterwards as negligent of one great branch of the profession. His house was in a stately new street called Ormond Street, and in it he had a handsome library; but all the books in it treated of things that were past; none of them planned or looked forward into the future. I worked away—partly for the sake of my family at home, partly because my uncle had really taught me to enjoy the kind of practice in which he himself took such delight. I suspect I worked too hard; at any rate, in seventeen hundred

and eighteen I was far from well, and my good uncle was disturbed by my ill looks.

One day he rang the bell twice into the clerk's room at the dingy office in Grays Inn Lane. It was the summons for me, and I went into his private room just as a gentleman—whom I knew well enough by sight as an Irish lawyer of more reputation than he deserved—was leaving.

My uncle was slowly rubbing his hands together and considering. I was there two or three minutes before he spoke. Then he told me that I must pack up my portmanteau that very afternoon, and start that night by post-horse for West Chester. I should get there, if all went well, at the end of five days' time, and must then wait for a packet to cross over to Dublin; from thence I must proceed to a certain town named Kildoon, and in that neighbourhood I was to remain, making certain inquiries as to the existence of any descendant of the younger branch of a family to whom some valuable estates had descended in the female line. The Irish lawyer whom I had seen was weary of the case, and would willingly have given up the property without further ado to a man who appeared to claim them; but on laying his tables and trees before my uncle, the latter had foreseen so many possible prior claimants, that the lawyer had begged him to undertake the management of the whole business. In his youth, my uncle would have liked nothing better than going over to Ireland himself, and ferreting out every scrap of paper or parchment, and every word of tradition respecting the family. As it was, old and gouty, he deputed me.

Accordingly, I went to Kildoon. I suspect I had something of my uncle's delight in following up a genealogical scent, for I very soon found out, when on the spot, that Mr. Rooney the Irish lawyer would have got both himself and the first claimant into a terrible scrape, if he had pronounced his opinion that the estates ought to be given up to him. There were three poor Irish fellows, each nearer of kin to the last possessor; but a generation before there was a still nearer relation, who had never been accounted for, nor his existence ever discovered by the lawyers, I venture to think, till I routed him out from the memory of some of the old dependants of the family. What had become of him? I travelled backwards and forwards; I crossed over to France, and came back again with a slight clue, which ended in my discovering that, wild and dissipated himself, he had left one child, a son, of yet worse character than his father; that this same Hugh Fitzgerald had married a very beautiful serving-woman of the Byrnes—a person below him in hereditary rank, but above him in character; that he had died soon after his marriage, leaving one child, whether a boy or a girl I could not learn, and that the mother had returned to live in the family of the Byrnes. Now the chief of this latter family was serving in the Duke of Berwick's regiment, and it was long before I could hear from him; it was more than a year before I got a short, haughty letter—I fancy he had a soldier's contempt for a civilian, an Irishman's hatred for an Englishman, an exiled Jacobite's jealousy of one who prospered and lived tranquilly under the government he looked upon as an usurpation. "Bridget Fitzgerald," he said, "had been faithful to the fortunes of his sister—had followed her abroad, and to England when Mrs. Starkey had thought fit to return. Both his sister and her husband were dead; he knew nothing of Bridget Fitzgerald at the present time: probably Sir Philip Tempest, his nephew's guardian, might be able to give me some information." I have not given the little contemptuous terms; the way in which faithful service was meant to imply more than it said—all that has nothing to do with my story. Sir Philip, when applied to, told me that he paid an annuity regularly to an old woman named Fitzgerald, living at Coldholme (the village near Starkey Manor House). Whether she had any descendants he could not say.

One bleak March evening, I came in sight of the places described in the beginning of my story. I could hardly understand the rude dialect in which the direction to old Bridget's house was given.

"Yo' see yon furleets" all run together, gave me no idea that I was to guide myself by the distant lights that shone in the windows of the hall, occupied for the time by a farmer who held the post of steward, while the Squire, now four or five and twenty, was making the grand tour. However, at last, I reached Bridget's cottage—a low, moss-grown place; the palings that had once surrounded it were broken and gone; and the underwood of the forest came up to the walls, and must have darkened the windows. It was about seven o'clock—not late to my London notions—but, after knocking for some time at the door and receiving no reply, I was driven to conjecture that the occupant of the house was gone to bed. So I betook myself to the nearest church I had seen, three miles back on the road I had come, sure that close to that I should find an inn of some kind; and early the next morning I set off back to Coldholme, by a field-path which my host assured me I should find a shorter cut than the road I had taken the night before. It was a cold sharp morning; my feet left prints in the sprinkling of hoar-frost that covered the ground; nevertheless, I saw an old woman, whom I instinctively suspected to be the object of my search, in a sheltered covert on one side of my path. I lingered and watched her. She must have been considerably above the middle size in her prime, for when she raised herself from the stooping position in which I first saw her, there was

something fine and commanding in the first erectness of her figure. She drooped again in a minute or two, and seemed looking for something on the ground, as, with bent head, she turned off from the spot where I gazed upon her, and was lost to my sight. I fancy I missed my way, and made a round in spite of the landlord's directions, for by the time I had reached Bridget's cottage she was there, with no semblance of hurried walk or discomposure of any kind. The door was slightly ajar. I knocked, and the majestic figure stood before me, silently awaiting the explanation of my errand. Her teeth were all gone, so the nose and chin were brought near together; the grey eyebrows were straight and almost hung over her deep cavernous eyes, and the thick white hair lay in silvery masses over the low, wide, wrinkled forehead. For a moment I stood uncertain how to shape my answer to the solemn questioning of her silence.

"Your name is Bridget Fitzgerald, I believe?"

She bowed her head in assent.

"I have something to say to you. May I come in? I am unwilling to keep you standing."

"You cannot tire me," she said, and at first she seemed inclined to deny me the shelter of her roof. But the next moment,—she had searched the very soul in me with her eyes during that instant,—she led me in, and dropped the shadowing hood of her grey draping cloak, which had previously hid part of the character of her countenance. The cottage was rude and bare enough. But before that picture of the Virgin, of which I have made mention, there stood a little cup filled with fresh primroses. While she paid her reverence to the Madonna, I understood why she had been out seeking through the clumps of green in the sheltered copse. Then she turned round, and bade me be seated. The expression of her face, which all this time I was studying, was not bad, as the stories of my last night's landlord had led me to expect; it was a wild, stern, fierce, indomitable countenance, seamed and scarred by agonies of solitary weeping; but it was neither cunning nor malignant.

"My name is Bridget Fitzgerald," said she, by way of opening our conversation.

"And your husband was Hugh Fitzgerald, of Knock-Mahon, near Kildoon, in Ireland?"

A faint light came into the dark gloom of her eyes.

"He was."

"May I ask if you had any children by him?"

The light in her eyes grew quick and red. She tried to speak, I could see; but something rose in her throat, and choked her, and until she could speak calmly, she would fain not speak at all before a stranger. In a minute or so she said:

"I had a daughter — one Mary Fitzgerald,—" then her strong nature mastered her strong will, and she cried out, with a trembling, wailing cry: "Oh, man! what of her?—what of her?"

She rose from her seat and came and clutched at my arm, and looked in my eyes. There she read, as I suppose, my utter ignorance of what had become of her child; for she went blindly back to her chair, and sat rocking and softly moaning to herself, as if I were not there; I not daring to speak to the lone and awful woman. After a little pause, she knelt down before the picture of our Lady of the Holy Heart, and spoke to her by all the fanciful and poetic names of the Litany.

"O, Rose of Sharon! O, Tower of David! O, Star of the Sea! have you no comfort for my sore heart? Am I for ever to hope? Grant me at least despair,"—and so on she went, heedless of my presence. Her prayers grew wilder and wilder, till they seemed to me to touch on the borders of madness and blasphemy. Almost involuntarily, I spoke as if to stop her.

"Have you any reason to think that your daughter is dead?"

She rose from her knees, and came and stood before me.

"Mary Fitzgerald is dead," said she. "I shall never see her again in the flesh. No tongue ever told me. But I know she is dead. I have yearned so to see her, and my heart's will is fearful and strong; it would have drawn her to me before now, if she had been a wanderer on the other side of the world. I wonder often it has not drawn her out of the grave to come and stand before me, and hear me tell her how I loved her. For, sir, we parted unfriends."

I knew nothing but the dry particulars needed for my lawyer's quest, but I could not help feeling for the desolate woman; and she must have read the unusual sympathy with her wistful eyes.

"Yes, sir, we did. She never knew how I loved her; and we parted unfriends; and I fear me that I wished her voyage might not turn out well, only meaning,—O, blessed Virgin! you know I only meant that she should come home to mother's arms as to the happiest place on earth; but my wishes are terrible — their power goes beyond my thought—and there is no hope for me, if my words brought Mary harm."

"But," I said, "you do not know that she is dead. Even now, you hoped she might be alive. Listen to me," and I told her the tale I have already told you, giving it all in the driest manner, for I wanted to recall the clear sense that I felt almost sure she had possessed in her younger days, and by keeping up her attention to details restrain the vague wildness of her grief.

She listened with deep attention, putting from time to time such questions as convinced me I had to do with no common intelligence, however dimmed and shorn by solitude and

mysterious sorrow. Then she took up her tale; and in few brief words, told me of her wanderings abroad in vain search after her daughter; sometimes in the wake of armies, sometimes in camp, sometimes in city. The lady, whose waiting-woman Mary had gone to be, had died soon after the date of her last letter home; her husband, the foreign officer, had been serving in Hungary, whither Bridget had followed him, but too late to find him. Vague rumours reached her that Mary had made a great marriage; and this sting of doubt was added,—whether the mother might not be close to her child under her new name, and even hearing of her every day, and yet never recognising the lost one under the appellation she then bore. At length the thought took possession of her, that it was possible that all this time Mary might be at home at Coldholme, in the Trough of Bolland, in Lancashire, in England; and home came Bridget in that vain hope to her desolate hearth, and empty cottage. Here she had thought it safest to remain; if Mary was in life, it was here she would seek for her mother.

I noted down one or two particulars out of Bridget's narrative that I thought might be of use to me; for I was stimulated to further search in a strange and extraordinary manner. It seemed as if it were impressed upon me, that I must take up the quest where Bridget had laid it down; and this for no reason that had previously influenced me (such as my uncle's anxiety on the subject, my own reputation as a lawyer, and so on), but from some strange power which had taken possession of my will only that very morning, and which forced it in the direction it chose.

"I will go," said I. "I will spare nothing in the search. Trust to me. I will learn all that can be learnt. You shall know all that money, or pains, or wit can discover. It is true she may be long dead: but she may have left a child."

"A child!" she cried, as if for the first time this idea had struck her mind. "Hear him, Blessed Virgin! he says she may have left a child. And you have never told me, though I have prayed so for a sign, waking or sleeping!"

"Nay," said I, "I know nothing but what you tell me. You say you heard of her marriage."

But she caught nothing of what I said. She was praying to the Virgin in a kind of ecstasy, which seemed to render her unconscious of my very presence.

From Coldholme I went to Sir Philip Tempest's. The wife of the foreign officer had been a cousin of his father's, and from him I thought I might gain some particulars as to the existence of the Count de la Tour d'Auvergne, and where I could find him; for I knew how questions de vive voix aid the flagging recollection, and I was determined to lose no chance for want of trouble. But Sir Philip had gone abroad, and it would be some time before I could receive an answer. So I followed my uncle's advice, to whom I had mentioned how wearied I felt, both in body and mind, by my will-o'-the-wisp search. He immediately told me to go to Harrogate, there to await Sir Philip's reply. I should be near to one of the places connected with my search, Coldholme; not far from Sir Philip Tempest, in case he returned, and I wished to ask him any further questions; and, in conclusion, my uncle bade me try to forget all about my business for a time.

This was far easier said than done. I have seen a child on a common blown along by a high wind, without power of standing still and resisting the tempestuous force. I was somewhat in the same predicament as regarded my mental state. Something resistless seemed to urge my thoughts on through every possible course by which there was a chance of attaining to my object. I did not see the sweeping moors when I walked out; when I held a book in my hand, and read the words, their sense did not penetrate to my brain. If I slept, I went on with the same ideas, always flowing in the same directoin. This could not last long without having a bad effect on the body. I had an illness, which, although I was racked with pain, was a positive relief to me, as it compelled me to live in the present suffering, and not in the visionary researches I had been continually making before. My kind uncle came to nurse me; and after the immediate danger was over, my life seemed to slip away in delicious languor for two or three months. I did not ask—so much did I dread falling into the old channel of thought—whether any reply had been received to my letter to Sir Philip. I turned my whole imagination right away from all that subject. My uncle remained with me until nigh summer, and then returned to his business in London; leaving me perfectly well, although not completely strong. I was to follow him in a fortnight; when, as he said, "we would look over letters, and talk about several things." I knew what this little speech alluded to, and shrank from the train of thought it suggested, which was so intimately connected with my first feelings of illness. However, I had a fortnight more to roam on those invigorating Yorkshire moors.

In those days, there was one large, rambling inn at Harrogate, close to the Medicinal Spring; but it was already becoming too small for the accommodation of the influx of visitors, and many lodged round about, in the farmhouses of the district. It was so early in the season, that I had the inn pretty much to myself; and, indeed, felt rather like a visitor in a private house, so intimate had the landlord and landlady become with me during my long illness. She would chide me for being out so late on the moors, or for having

been too long without food, quite in a motherly way; while he consulted me about vintages and wines, and taught me many a Yorkshire wrinkle about horses. In my walks I met other strangers from time to time. Even before my uncle had left me, I had noticed, with half-torpid curiosity, a young lady of very striking appearance, who went about always accompanied by an elderly companion,—hardly a gentlewoman, but with something in her look that prepossessed me in her favour. The younger lady always put her veil down when any one approached; so it had been only once or twice, when I had come upon her at a sudden turn in the path, that I had even had a glimpse of her face. I am not sure if it was beautiful, though in after life I grew to think it so. But it was at this time overshadowed by a sadness that never varied: a pale, quiet, resigned look of intense suffering, that irresistibly attracted me,—not with love, but with a sense of infinite compassion for one so young yet so hopelessly unhappy. The companion wore something of the same look: quiet, melancholy, hopeless, yet resigned. I asked my landlord who they were. He said they were called Clarke; and wished to be considered as mother and daughter; but that, for his part, he did not believe that to be their right name, nor that there was any such relationship between them. They had been in the neighbourhood of Harrogate for some time, lodging in a remote farmhouse. The people there would tell nothing about them; saying that they paid handsomely, and never did any harm; so why should they be speaking of any strange things that might happen? That, as the landlord shrewdly observed, showed there was something out of the common way: he had heard that the elderly woman was a cousin of the farmer's where they lodged, and so the regard existing between relations might help to keep them quiet.

"What did he think then, was the reason for their extreme seclusion?" asked I.

"Nay, he could not tell, not he. He had heard that the young lady, for all as quiet as she seemed, played strange pranks at times." He shook his head when I asked him for more particulars, and refused to give them, which made me doubt if he knew any, for he was in general a talkative and communicative man. In default of other interests, after my uncle left, I set myself to watch these two people. I hovered about their walks, drawn towards them with a strange fascination, which was not diminished by their evident annoyance at so frequently meeting me. One day I had the sudden good fortune to be at hand when they were alarmed by the attack of a bull, which, in those unenclosed grazing districts, was a particularly dangerous occurrence. I have other and more important things to relate, than to tell of the accident which gave me an opportunity of rescuing them; it is enough to say, that this event was the beginning of an acquaintance, reluctantly acquiesced in by them, but eagerly prosecuted by me. I can hardly tell when intense curiosity became merged in love, but in less than ten days after my uncle's departure I was passionately enamoured of Mistress Lucy, as her attendant called her; carefully—for this I noted well—avoiding any address which appeared as if there was an equality of station between them. I noticed also that Mrs. Clarke, the elderly woman, after her first reluctance to allow me to pay them any attentions was overcome, was cheered by my evident attachment to the young girl; it seemed to lighten her heavy burden of care, and she evidently favoured my visits to the farmhouse where they lodged. It was not so with Lucy. A more attractive person I never saw, in spite of her depression of manner, and shrinking avoidance of me. I felt sure at once, that whatever was the source of her grief, it arose from no fault of her own. It was difficult to draw her into conversation, but when at times, for a moment or two, I beguiled her into talk, I could see a rare intelligence in her face, and a grave trusting look in the soft grey eyes that were raised for a minute to mine. I made every excuse I possibly could for going there. I sought wild flowers for Lucy's sake; I planned walks for Lucy's sake; I watched the heavens by night, in hopes that some unusual beauty of sky would justify me in tempting Mrs. Clarke and Lucy forth upon the moors, to gaze at the great purple dome above.

It seemed to me that Lucy was aware of my love; but that, for some motive which I could not guess, she would fain have repelled me; but then again I saw, or fancied I saw that her heart spoke in my favour, and that there was a struggle going on in her mind, which at times (I loved so dearly) I could have begged her to spare herself, even though the happiness of my whole life should have been the sacrifice; for her complexion grew paler, her aspect of sorrow more hopeless, her delicate frame yet slighter. During this period I had written, I should say, to my uncle, to beg to be allowed to prolong my stay at Harrogate, not giving any reason; but such was his tenderness towards me, that in a few days I heard from him, giving me a willing permission, and only charging me to take care of myself, and not use too much exertion during the hot weather.

One sultry evening I drew near the farm. The windows of their parlour were open, and I heard voices as I turned the corner of the house, as I passed the first window (there were two windows in their little ground-floor room). I saw Lucy distinctly; but when I had knocked at their door—the house-door stood always ajar—she was gone, and I only saw Mrs. Clarke, turning over the work-things lying on the table, in a nervous and purposeless manner. I felt by instinct that a

conversation of some importance was coming on, in which I should be expected to say what was my object in paying these frequent visits. I was glad of the opportunity. My uncle had several times alluded to the pleasant possibility of my bringing home a young wife to cheer and adorn the old house in Ormond Street. He was rich, and I was to succeed him, and had, as I knew, a fair reputation for so young a lawyer. So on my side I saw no obstacle. It was true that Lucy was shrouded in mystery; her name (I was convinced it was not Clarke), birth, parentage, and previous life were unknown to me. But I was sure of her goodness, and sweet innocence, and although I knew that there must be something painful to be told, to account for her mournful sadness, yet I was willing to bear my share in her grief, whatever it was.

Mrs. Clarke began, as if it was a relief to her to plunge into the subject:

"We have thought, sir—at least I have thought—that you know very little of us, nor we of you, indeed; not enough to warrant the intimate acquaintance we have fallen into. I beg your pardon, sir," she went on, nervously; "I am but a plain kind of woman, and I mean to use no rudeness; but I must say straight out that I—we—think it would be better for you not to come so often to see us. She is very unprotected, and——"

"Why should I not come to see you, dear madam?" asked I, eagerly, glad of the opportunity of explaining myself. "I come, I own, because I have learnt to love Mistress Lucy, and wish to teach her to love me."

Mistress Clarke shook her head, and sighed.

"Don't, sir—neither love her, nor, for the sake of all you hold sacred, teach her to love you! If I am too late, and you love her already, forget her,—forget these last few weeks. O! I should never have allowed you to come!" she went on, passionately; "but what am I to do? We are forsaken by all, except the great God, and even He permits a strange and evil power to afflict us—what am I to do? Where is it to end?" She wrung her hands in her distress; then she turned to me: "Go away, sir; go away, before you learn to care any more for her. I ask it for your own sake—I implore. You have been good and kind to us, and we shall always recollect you with gratitude; but go away now, and never come back to cross our fatal path."

"Indeed, madam," said I, "I shall do no such thing. You urge it for my own sake. I have no fear, so urged—nor wish, except to hear more—all. I cannot have seen Mistress Lucy in all the intimacy of this last fortnight, without acknowledging her goodness and innocence; and without seeing—pardon me, madam—that for some reason you are two very lonely women, in some mysterious sorrow and distress. Now, though I am not powerful myself, yet I have friends who are so wise and kind, that they may be said to possess power. Tell me some particulars. Why are you in grief—what is your secret—why are you here? I declare solemnly that nothing you have said has daunted me in my wish to become Lucy's husband; nor will I shrink from any difficulty that, as such an aspirant, I may have to encounter. You say you are friendless—why cast away an honest friend? I will tell you of people to whom you may write, and who will answer any questions as to my character and prospects. I do not shun enquiry."

She shook her head again. "You had better go away, sir. You know nothing about us."

"I know your names," said I, "and I have heard you allude to the part of the country from which you came, which I happen to know as a wild and lonely place, and not many people living there. If I chose to go there, I could easily ascertain all about you; but I would rather hear it from you yourself." You see I wanted to pique her into telling me something definite.

"You do not know our true names, sir," said she, hastily.

"Well, I may have conjectured as much. But tell me, then, I conjure you. Give me your reasons for distrusting my willingness to stand by what I have said with regard to Mistress Lucy."

"Oh, what can I do?" exclaimed she. "If I am turning away a true friend, as he says?—Stay!" coming to a sudden decision—"I will tell you something—I cannot tell you all—you would not believe it. But perhaps I can tell you enough to prevent your going on in your hopeless attachment. I am not Lucy's mother."

"So I conjectured," I said. "Go on."

"I do not even know if she is the legitimate or illegitimate child of her father. But he is cruelly turned against her; and her mother is long dead; and, for a terrible reason, she has no other creature to keep constant to her but me. She—only two years ago—such a darling and such a pride in her father's house? Why, sir, there is a mystery that might happen in connection with her any moment; and then you would go away like all the rest; and when you next heard her name you would loathe her. Others, who have loved her longer, have done so before now. My poor child, whom neither God nor man has mercy upon—or, surely, she would die!"

The good woman was stopped by her crying. I confess I was a little stunned by her last words; but only for a moment. At any rate, till I knew definitely what was this mysterious stain upon one so simple, and pure, as Lucy seemed, I would not desert her, and so I said; and she made answer:

"If you are daring in your heart to think harm of my child, sir, after knowing her as

you have done, you are no good man yourself; but I am so foolish and helpless in my great sorrow, that I would fain hope to find a friend in you. I cannot help trusting that, although you may no longer feel towards her as a lover, you will have pity upon us; and perhaps, by your learning, you can tell us where to go for aid."

"I implore you to tell me," I cried, almost maddened by this suspense.

"I cannot," said she, solemnly. "I am under a deep vow of secrecy. If you are to be told, it must be by her." She left the room, and I remained to ponder over this strange interview. I mechanically turned over the few books, and, with eyes that saw nothing at the time, examined the tokens of Lucy's frequent presence in that room.

When I got home at night, I remembered how all these trifles spoke of a pure and tender heart, and innocent life. Mistress Clarke returned; she had been crying sadly.

"Yes," said she, "it is as I feared: she loves you so much that she is willing to run the fearful risk of telling you all herself—she acknowledges it is but a poor chance; but your sympathy will be a balm, if you give it. To-morrow, come here at ten in the morning; and, as you hope for pity in your hour of agony, repress all show of fear or repugnance you may feel towards one so grievously afflicted."

I half smiled. "Have no fear," I said. It seemed too absurd to imagine my feeling dislike to Lucy.

"Her father loved her well," said she, gravely, "yet he drove her out like some monstrous thing."

Just at this moment came a peal of ringing laughter from the garden. It was Lucy's voice; it sounded as if she were standing just on one side of the open casement. It sounded as though she were suddenly stirred to merriment—merriment verging on boisterousness by the doings or sayings of some other person. I can scarcely say why, but the sound jarred on me inexpressibly. She knew the subject of our conversation, and must have been at least aware of the state of agitation her friend was in: she herself usually so gentle and quiet. I half rose to go to the window, and satisfy my instinctive curiosity as to what had provoked this burst of ill-timed laughter; but, Mrs. Clarke threw her whole weight and power upon the hand with which she pressed and kept me down.

"For God's sake!" she said, white and trembling all over, "sit still; be quiet. Oh! be patient. To-morrow you will know all. Leave us, for we are sorely afflicted. Do not seek to know more about us."

Again that laugh—so musical in sound, yet so discordant to my heart. She held me tight—tighter; without positive violence I could not have risen. I was sitting with my back to the window, but I felt a shadow pass between the sun's warmth and me, and a strange shudder ran through my frame. In a minute or two she released me.

"Go," repeated she. "Be warned, I ask you once more. I do not think you can stand this knowledge that you seek. If I had had my own way, Lucy should never have yielded, and promised to tell you all. Who knows what may come of it?"

"I am firm in my wish to know all. I return at ten to-morrow morning, and then expect to see Mistress Lucy herself."

I turned away; having my own suspicions, I confess, as to Mistress Clarke's sanity.

Conjectures as to the meaning of her hints, and uncomfortable thoughts connected with that strange laughter, filled my mind. I could hardly sleep. I arose early; and long before the hour I had appointed, I was on the path over the common that led to the old farm-house where they lodged. I suppose that Lucy had passed no better a night than I; for there she was also, slowly pacing with her even step, her eyes bent down, her whole look most saintly and pure. She started when I came close to her, and grew paler as I reminded her of my appointment, and spoke with something of the impatience of obstacles that, seeing her once more, had called up afresh in my mind. All strange and terrible hints, and giddy merriment were forgotten. My heart gave forth words of fire, and my tongue uttered them. Her colour went and came, as she listened; but, when I had ended my passionate speeches, she lifted her soft eyes to me, and said:

"But you know that you have something to learn about me yet. I only want to say this: I shall not think less of you—less well of you, I mean—if you, too, fall away from me when you know all. Stop!" said she, as if fearing another burst of mad words. "Listen to me. My father is a man of great wealth. I never knew my mother; she must have died when I was very young. When first I remember anything, I was living in a great lonely house, with my dear and faithful Mistress Clarke. My father, even, was not there; he was—he is—a soldier, and his duties lay abroad. But he came, from time to time; and every time, I think he loved me more and more. He brought me rarities from foreign lands, which prove to me now how much he must have thought of me during his absences. I can sit down and measure the depth of his lost love now, by such standards as these. I never thought whether he loved me or not, then; it was so natural, that it was like the air I breathed. Yet he was an angry man at times, even then; but never with me. He was very reckless, too; and once or twice I heard a whisper among the servants that a doom was over him, and that he knew it, and tried to drown his knowledge in wild activity, and even sometimes, sir, in wine. So I grew up in this grand mansion, in that lonely place.

Everything around me seemed at my disposal, and I think everyone loved me; I am sure I loved them. Till about two years ago —I remember it well—my father had come to England, to us; and he seemed so proud and so pleased with me and all I had done. And one day, his tongue seemed loosened with wine, and he told me much that I had not known till then,—how dearly he had loved my mother, yet how his wilful usage had caused her death; and then he went on to say how he loved me better than any creature on earth, and how, some day, he hoped to take me to foreign places, for that he could hardly bear these long absences from his only child. Then he seemed to change suddenly, and said, in a strange, wild way, that I was not to believe what he said; that there was many a thing he loved better—his horse—his dog—I know not what.

"And 'twas only the next morning that, when I came into his room to ask his blessing as was my wont, he received me with fierce and angry words. 'Why had I,' so he asked, 'been delighting myself in such wanton mischief—dancing over all the tender plants in the flower-beds, all set with the famous Dutch bulbs he had brought from Holland?' I had never been out of doors that morning, sir, and I could not conceive what he meant, and so I said; and then he swore at me for a liar, and said I was of no true blood, for he had seen me doing all that mischief himself—with his own eyes. What could I say? He would not listen to me, and even my tears seemed only to irritate him. That day was the beginning of my great sorrows. Not long after, he reproached me for my undue familiarity—all unbecoming a gentlewoman —with his grooms. I had been in the stable-yard, laughing and talking, he said. Now, sir, I am something of a coward by nature, and I had always dreaded horses; besides that, my father's servants—those whom he brought with him from foreign parts—were wild fellows, whom I had always avoided, and to whom I had never spoken except as a lady must needs from time to time speak to her father's people. Yet my father called me by names of which I hardly know the meaning, but my heart told me they were such as shame any modest woman; and from that day he turned quite against me;—nay, sir, not many weeks after that, he came in with a riding-whip in his hand; and, accusing me harshly of evil doings, of which I knew no more than you, sir, he was about to strike me, and I, all in bewildering tears, was ready to take his stripes as great kindness compared to his harder words, when suddenly he stopped his arm mid-way, gasped and staggered, crying out, 'The curse —the curse!' I looked up in terror. In the great mirror opposite I saw myself, and right behind another wicked fearful self, so like me that my soul seemed to quiver within me, as though not knowing to which similitude of body it belonged. My father saw my double at the same moment, either in its dreadful reality, whatever that might be, or in the scarcely less terrible reflection in the mirror; but what came of it at that moment I cannot say, for I suddenly swooned away; and when I came to myself I was lying in my bed, and my faithful Clarke sitting by me. I was in my bed for days; and even while I lay there my double was seen by all, flitting about the house and gardens, always about some mischievous or detestable work. What wonder that everyone shrank from me in dread—that my father drove me forth at length, when the disgrace of which I was the cause was past his patience to bear. Mistress Clarke came with me; and here we try to live such a life of piety and prayer as may in time set me free from the curse."

All the time she had been speaking, I had been weighing her story in my mind. I had hitherto put cases of witchcraft on one side, as mere superstitions; and my uncle and I had had many an argument, he supporting himself by the opinion of his good friend Sir Matthew Hale. Yet this sounded like the tale of one bewitched; or was it merely the effect of a life of extreme seclusion telling on the nerves of a sensitive girl? My scepticism inclined me to the latter belief, and when she paused I said:

"I fancy that some physician could have disabused your father of his belief in visions——"

Just at that instant, standing as I was opposite to her in the full and perfect morning light, I saw behind her another figure—a ghastly resemblance, complete in likeness, so far as form and feature and minutest touch of dress could go, but with a loathsome demon soul looking out of the grey eyes, that were in turns mocking and voluptuous. My heart stood still within me; every hair rose up erect; my flesh crept with horror. I could not see the grave and tender Lucy—my eyes were fascinated by the creature beyond. I know not why, but I put out my hand to clutch it; I grasped nothing but empty air, and my whole blood curdled to ice. For a moment I could not see; then my sight came back, and I saw Lucy standing before me, alone, deathly pale, and I could have fancied, almost, shrunk in size.

"It has been near me?" she said, as if asking a question.

The sound seemed taken out of her voice; it was husky as the notes on an old harpsichord when the strings have ceased to vibrate. She read her answer in my face, I suppose, for I could not speak. Her look was one of intense fear, but that died away into an aspect of most humble patience. At length she seemed to force herself to face behind and around her: she saw the purple moors, the blue distant hills, quivering in the sunlight, but nothing else.

"Will you take me home?" she said meekly.

I took her by the hand, and led her silently through the budding heather—we dared not speak; for we could not tell but that the dread creature was listening, although unseen—but that IT might appear and push us asunder. I never loved her more fondly than now when—and that was the unspeakable misery — the idea of her was becoming so inextricably blended with the shuddering thought of IT. She seemed to understand what I must be feeling. She let go my hand, which she had kept clasped until then, when we reached the garden gate, and went forwards to meet her anxious friend, who was standing by the window looking for her. I could not enter the house: I needed silence, society, leisure, change—I knew not what—to shake off the sensation of that creature's presence. Yet I lingered about the garden—I hardly know why; I suppose partly because I feared to encounter the resemblance again on the solitary common, where it had vanished, and partly from a feeling of inexpressible compassion for Lucy. In a few minutes Mistress Clarke came forth and joined me. We walked some paces in silence.

"You know all now," said she, solemnly.

"I saw IT," said I below my breath.

"And you shrink from us now," she said, with a hopelessness which stirred up all that was brave or good in me.

"Not a whit," said I. "Human flesh shrinks from an encounter with the powers of darkness: and for some reason unknown to me the pure and holy Lucy is their victim."

"The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children," she said.

"Who is her father?" asked I. "Knowing as much as I do, I may surely know more—know all. Tell me, I entreat you, madam, all that you can conjecture respecting this demoniac persecution of one so good."

"I will; but not now. I must go to Lucy now. Come this afternoon, I will see you alone; and O, sir, I will trust that you may yet find some way to help us in our sore trouble."

I was miserably exhausted by the swooning affright which had taken possession of me. When I reached the inn, I staggered in like one overcome by wine. I went to my own private room. It was some time before I saw that the weekly post had come in, and brought me my letters. There was one from my uncle, one from my home in Devonshire, and one, re-directed over the first address, sealed with a great coat of arms. It was from Sir Philip Tempest: my letter of inquiry respecting Mary Fitzgerald had reached him at Liège, where it so happened that the Count de la Tour d'Auvergne was quartered at the very time. He remembered his wife's beautiful attendant; she had had high words with the deceased countess respecting her intercourse with an English gentleman of good standing, who was also in the foreign service. The countess augured evil of his intentions; while Mary, proud and vehement, asserted that he would soon marry her, and resented her mistress's warnings as an insult. The consequence was, that she had left Madame de la Tour d'Auvergne's service, and, as the count believed, had gone to live with the Englishman; whether he had married her, or not, he could not say. "But," added Sir Philip Tempest, "you may easily hear what particulars you wish to know respecting Mary Fitzgerald from the Englishman himself, if, as I suspect, he is no other than my neighbour and former acquaintance, Mr. Gisborne, of Skipford Hall, in the West Riding. I am led to the belief that he is no other by several small particulars, none of which are in themselves conclusive, but which, taken together, make a mass of presumptive evidence. As far as I could make out from the count's foreign pronunciation, Gisborne was the name of the Englishman; I know that Gisborne of Skipford was abroad and in the foreign service at that time—he was a likely fellow enough for such an exploit; and, above all, certain expressions recur to my mind which he used in reference to old Bridget Fitzgerald, of Coldholme, whom he once encountered while staying with me at Starkey Manor House. I remember that the meeting seemed to have produced some extraordinary effect upon his mind, as though he had suddenly discovered some connection which she might have had with his previous life. I beg you to let me know if I can be of any further service to you. Your uncle once rendered me a good turn, and I will gladly repay it, so far as in me lies, to his nephew."

I was now apparently close on the discovery which I had striven so many months to attain. But success had lost its zest. I put my letters down, and seemed to forget them all in thinking of the morning I had passed that very day. Nothing was real but the unreal presence, which had come like an evil blast across my bodily eyes, and burnt itself down upon my brain. Dinner came, and went away untouched. Early in the afternoon I walked to the farm-house. I found Mistress Clarke alone, and I was glad and relieved. She was evidently prepared to tell me all I might wish to hear.

"You asked me for Mistress Lucy's true name; it is Gisborne," she began.

"Not Gisborne of Skipford?" I exclaimed, breathless with anticipation.

"The same," said she quietly, not regarding my manner. "Her father is a man of note; although, being a Roman Catholic, he cannot take that rank in this country to which his station entitles him. The consequence is that he lives much abroad—has been a soldier, I am told."

"And Lucy's mother?" I asked.

She shook her head. "I never knew her," said she. "Lucy was about three years old when I was engaged to take charge of her. Her mother was dead."

"But you know her name?—you can tell if it was Mary Fitzgerald?"

She looked astonished. "That was her name. But, sir, how came you to be so well acquainted with it? It was a mystery to the whole household at Skipford Court. She was some beautiful young woman whom he lured away from her protectors while he was abroad. I have heard said he practised some terrible deceit upon her, and when she came to know it she was neither to have nor to hold, but rushed off from his very arms, and threw herself into a rapid stream and was drowned. It stung him deep with remorse, but I used to think the remembrance of the mother's cruel death made him love the child yet dearer."

I told her, as briefly as might be, of my researches after the descendant and heir of the Fitzgeralds of Kildoon, and added—something of my old lawyer spirit returning into me for the moment—that I had no doubt but that we should prove Lucy to be of right possessed of large estates in Ireland.

No flush came over her grey face; no light into her eyes. "And what is all the wealth in the whole world to that poor girl?" she said. "It will not free her from the ghastly bewitchment which persecutes her. As for money, what a pitiful thing it is; it cannot touch her."

"No more can the Evil Creature harm her," I said. "Her holy nature dwells apart, and cannot be defiled or stained by all the devilish arts in the whole world."

"True! but it is a cruel fate to know that all shrink from her, sooner or later, as from one possessed, accursed."

"How came it to pass?" I asked.

"Nay, I know not. Old rumours there are, that were bruited through the household at Skipford."

"Tell me," I demanded.

"They came from servants, who would fain account for everything. They say that, many years ago, Mr. Gisborne killed a dog belonging to an old witch at Coldholme; that she cursed, with a dreadful and mysterious curse, the creature, whatever it might be, that he should love best; and that it struck so deeply into his heart that for years he kept himself aloof from any temptation to love aught. But who could help loving Lucy?"

"You never heard the witch's name?" I gasped.

"Yes—they called her Bridget; they said he would never go near the spot again for terror of her. Yet he was a brave man!"

"Listen," said I, taking hold of her arm, the better to arrest her full attention; "if what I suspect holds true, that man stole Bridget's only child—the very Mary Fitzgerald who was Lucy's mother; if so, Bridget cursed him in ignorance of the deeper wrong he had done her. To this hour she yearns after her lost child, and questions the saints whether she be living or not. The roots of that curse lie deeper than she knows: she unwittingly banned him for a deeper guilt than that of killing a dumb beast. The sins of the fathers are indeed visited upon the children."

"But," said Mistres Clarke, eagerly, "she would never let evil rest on her own grandchild. Surely, sir, if what you say be true, there are hopes for Lucy. Let us go—go at once, and tell this fearful woman all that you suspect, and beseech her to take off the spell she has put upon her innocent grandchild."

It seemed to me, indeed, that something like this was the best course we could pursue. But first it was necessary to ascertain more than what mere rumour or careless hear-say could tell. My thoughts turned to my uncle—he could advise me wisely—he ought to know all. I resolved to go to him without delay; but I did not choose to tell Mistress Clarke of all the visionary plans that flitted through my mind. I simply declared my intention of proceeding straight to London on Lucy's affairs. I bade her believe that my interest on the young lady's behalf was greater than ever, and that my whole time should be given up to her cause. I saw that Mistress Clarke distrusted me, because my mind was too full of thoughts for my words to flow freely. She sighed and shook her head, and said, "Well, it was all right!" in such a tone that it was an implied reproach. But I was firm and constant in my heart, and I took confidence from that.

I rode to London. I rode long days drawn out into the lovely summer nights; I could not rest. I reached London. I told my uncle all, though in the stir of the great city the horror had faded away, and I could hardly imagine that he would believe the tale I told him of the fearful double of Lucy which I had seen on the lonely moor-side. But my uncle had lived many years, and learnt many things; and in the deep secrets of family history that had been confided to him he had heard of cases of innocent people bewitched and taken possession of by evil spirits yet more fearful than Lucy's. For, as he said, to judge from all I told him, that resemblance had no power over her—she was too pure and good to be tainted by its evil, haunting presence. It had, in all probability, so my uncle conceived, tried to suggest wicked thoughts and to tempt to wicked actions; but she, in her saintly maidenhood, had passed on undefiled by evil thought or deed. It could not touch her soul: but true, it set her apart from all sweet love or common human intercourse. My uncle threw himself with an energy more like six and twenty than sixty into the consideration of the whole case. He undertook the proving Lucy's descent,

and volunteered to go and find out Mr. Gisborne, and obtain, firstly, the legal proofs of Lucy's descent from the Fitzgeralds of Kildoon, and, secondly, he would try to hear all that he could respecting the working of the curse, and whether any and what means had been taken to exorcise that terrible appearance. For he told me of instances where, by prayers and long fasting, the evil possessor had been driven forth with howling and many cries from the body which it had come to inhabit; he spoke of those strange New England cases which had happened not so long before; of Mr. Defoe who had written a book, wherein he had named many modes of subduing apparitions, and sending them back whence they came; and, lastly, he spoke low of dreadful ways of compelling witches to undo their witchcraft. But I could not endure to hear of those tortures and burnings. I said that Bridget was rather a wild and savage woman than a malignant witch; and, above all, that Lucy was of her kith and kin; and that in putting her to the trial, by water or by fire, we should be torturing—it might be to the death—the ancestress of her we sought to redeem.

My uncle thought awhile, and then said, that in this last matter I was right—at any rate, it should not be tried, with his consent, till all other modes of remedy had failed; and assented to my proposal that I should go myself and see Bridget, and tell her all.

In accordance with this, I went down once more to the wayside inn near Coldholme. It was late at night when I arrived there; and, while I supped, I inquired of the landlord more particulars as to Bridget's ways. Solitary and savage had been her life for many years. Wild and despotic were her words and manner to those few people who came across her path. The country-folk did her imperious bidding, because they feared to disobey. If they pleased her, they prospered; if, on the contrary, they neglected or traversed her behests, misfortunes, small or great, fell on them and theirs. It was not detestation so much as an indefinable terror that she excited.

In the morning I went to see her. She was standing on the green outside her cottage, and received me with the sullen grandeur of a throneless queen. I read in her face that she recognised me, and that I was not unwelcome; but she stood silent till I had opened my errand.

"I have news of your daughter," said I, resolved to speak straight to all that I knew she felt of love, and not to spare her. "She is dead!"

The stern figure scarcely trembled, but her hand sought the support of the door-post.

"I knew that she was dead," said she, deep and low, and then was silent for an instant. "My tears that should have flowed for her were burnt up long years ago. Young man, tell me about her."

"Not yet," said I, having a strange power given me of confronting one, whom, nevertheless, in my secret soul I dreaded.

"You had once a little dog," I continued. The words called out in her more show of emotion than the intelligence of her daughter's death. She broke in upon my speech:

"I had! It was hers—the last thing I had of hers—and it was shot for wantonness! It died in my arms. The man who killed that dog rues it to this day. For that dumb beast's blood, his best-beloved stands accursed."

Her eyes distended as if she were in a trance and saw the working of her curse. Again I spoke:

"O, woman!" I said, "that best beloved, standing accursed before men, is your dead daughter's child."

The life, the energy, the passion came back to the eyes with which she pierced through me, to see if I spoke truth; then, without another question or word, she threw herself on the ground with fearful vehemence, and clutched at the innocent daisies with convulsed hands.

"Bone of my bone! flesh of my flesh! have I cursed thee—and art thou accursed?"

So she moaned as she lay prostrate in her great agony. I stood aghast at my own work. She did not hear my broken sentences; she asked no more, but the dumb confirmation my sad looks had given of that one fact, that her curse rested on her own daughter's child. The fear grew on me lest she should die in her strife of body and soul; and then would not Lucy remain under the spell as long as she lived?

Even at this moment, I saw Lucy coming through the woodland path that led to Bridget's cottage; Mistress Clarke was with her: I felt at my heart that it was her, by the balmy peace that the look of her sent over me, as she slowly advanced, a glad surprise shining out of her soft quiet eyes. That was as her gaze met mine. As her looks fell on the woman lying stiff, convulsed on the earth, they became full of tender pity; and she came forward to try and lift her up. Seating herself on the turf, she took Bridget's head into her lap; and, with gentle touches, she arranged the dishevelled grey hair streaming thick and wild from beneath her mutch.

"God help her," murmured Lucy. "How she suffers!"

At her desire we sought for water; but when we returned Bridget had recovered her wandering senses, and was kneeling with clasped hands before Lucy, gazing at that sweet sad face as though her troubled nature drank in health and peace from every moment's contemplation. A faint tinge on Lucy's pale cheeks showed me that she was aware of our return; otherwise it appeared as if she was conscious of her influence for good over the passionate and troubled woman kneeling before her, and would not willingly

avert her grave and loving eyes from that wrinkled and careworn countenance.

Suddenly,—in the twinkling of an eye,—the creature appeared, there, behind Lucy; fearfully the same as to outward semblance, but kneeling exactly as Bridget knelt, and clasping her hands in jesting mimicry as Bridget clasped hers in her ecstasy that was deepening into a prayer. Mistress Clarke cried out—Bridget arose slowly, her gaze fixed on the creature beyond: drawing her breath with a hissing sound, never moving her terrible eyes, that were steady as stone, she made a dart at that phantom, and caught, as I had done, a mere handful of empty air. We saw no more of the creature—it vanished as suddenly as it came, but Bridget looked slowly on, as if watching some receding form. Lucy sate still, white, trembling, drooping,—I think she would have swooned if I had not been there to uphold her. While I was attending to her, Bridget passed us, without a word to any one, and, entering her cottage, she barred herself in, and left us without.

All our endeavours were now directed to get Lucy back to the house where she had tarried the night before. Mistress Clarke told me that not hearing from me (some letter must have miscarried) she had grown impatient and despairing, and had urged Lucy to the enterprise of coming to seek her grandmother; not telling her, indeed, of the dread reputation she possessed, or how we suspected her of having so fearfully blighted that innocent girl; but, at the same time, hoping much from the mysterious stirring of blood, which Mistress Clarke trusted in for the removal of the curse. They had come by a different route from that which I had taken to a village inn not far from Coldholme, only the night before. This was the first interview between ancestress and descendant.

All through the sultry noon I wandered along the tangled wood-paths of the old neglected forest, thinking where to turn for remedy in a matter so complicated and mysterious. Meeting a countryman, I asked my way to the nearest clergyman, and went, hoping to obtain some counsel from him. But he proved to be a coarse and common-minded man, giving no time or attention to the intricacies of a case, but dashing out a strong opinion involving immediate action. For instance, as soon as I named Bridget Fitzgerald he exclaimed:

"The Coldholme witch! the Irish papist! I'd have had her ducked long since but for that other papist, Sir Philip Tempest. He has had to threaten honest folk about here over and over again, or they'd have had her up before the justices for her black doings. And it's the law of the land that witches should be burnt! Ay! and of Scripture, too, sir! yet you see a papist, if he's a rich squire, can overrule both law and Scripture. I'd carry a faggot myself to rid the country of her!"

Such an one could give me no help. I rather drew back what I had already said; and tried to make the parson forget it, by treating him to several pots of beer, in the village inn, to which we had adjourned for our conference at his suggestion. I left him as soon as I could, and returned to Coldholme, shaping my way past deserted Starkey Manor House, and coming upon it by the back. At that side were the oblong remains of the old moat, the waters of which lay placid and motionless under the crimson rays of the setting sun; with the forest-trees lying straight along each side, and their deep green foliage mirrored to blackness in the burnished surface of the moat below,—and the broken sun-dial at the end nearest the hall,—and the heron, standing on one leg at the water's edge, lazily looking down for fish—the lonely and desolate house scarce needed the broken windows, the weeds on the door-sill, the broken shutter softly flapping to and fro in the twilight breeze to fill up the picture of desertion and decay. I lingered about the place until the growing darkness warned me on. And then I passed along the path, cut by the orders of the last lady of Starkey Manor House, that led me to Bridget's cottage. I suddenly resolved to see her; and, in spite of closed doors—it might be of resolved will—she should see me. So I knocked at her door, gently, loudly, fiercely. I shook it so vehemently that at length the old hinges gave way, and with a crash it fell inwards, leaving me suddenly face to face with Bridget. I, red, heated, agitated with my so long baffled efforts—she, stiff as any stone, standing right facing me, her eyes dilated with terror, her ashen lips trembling, but her body motionless. In her hands she held her crucifix, as if by that holy symbol she sought to oppose my entrance. At sight of me, her whole frame relaxed, and she sank back upon a chair. Some mighty tension had given way. Still her eyes looked fearfully into the gloom of the outer air, made more opaque by the glimmer of the lamp inside, which she had placed before the picture of the Virgin.

"Is she there?" asked Bridget, hoarsely.

"No! Who? I am alone. You remember me."

"Yes," replied she, still terror-stricken. "But she—that creature—has been looking in upon me through that window all the day long. I have closed it up with my shawl; and then I saw her feet below the door, as long as it was light, and I knew she heard my very breathing—nay, worse, my very prayers; and I could not pray, for her listening choked the words ere they rose to my lips. Tell me, who is she?—what means that double girl I saw this morning? One had a look of my dead Mary; but the other curdled my blood, and yet it was the same!"

She had taken hold of my arm, as if to secure herself some human companionship. She shook all over with the slight, never-

ceasing tremor of intense terror. I told her my tale, as I have told it you, sparing none of the details.

How Mistress Clarke had told me that the resemblance had driven Lucy forth from her father's house—how I had disbelieved, until, with mine own eyes, I had seen another Lucy standing behind my Lucy, the same in form and feature, but with the demon-soul looking out of the eyes. I told her all, I say, believing that she—whose curse was working so upon the life of her innocent grandchild—was the only person who could find the remedy and the redemption. When I had done, she sate silent for many minutes.

"You love Mary's child?" she asked.

"I do, in spite of the fearful working of the curse—I love her. Yet I shrink from her ever since that day on the moor-side. And men must shrink from one so accompanied; friends and lovers must stand afar off. Oh, Bridget Fitzgerald! loosen the curse! Set her free!"

"Where is she?"

I eagerly caught at the idea that her presence was needed, in order, by some strange prayer or exorcism, the spell might be reversed.

"I will go and bring her to you," I exclaimed. But Bridget tightened her hold upon my arm.

"Not so," said she, in a low, hoarse voice. "It would kill me to see her again as I saw her this morning. And I must live till I have worked my work. Leave me!" said she, suddenly, and again taking up the cross. "I defy the demon I have called up. Leave me to wrestle with it!"

She stood up, as if in an ecstasy of inspiration, from which all fear was banished. I lingered—why, I can hardly tell,—until once more she bade me begone. As I went along the forest way I looked back, and saw her planting the cross in the empty threshold, where the door had been.

The next morning Lucy and I went to seek her, to bid her join her prayers with ours. The cottage stood open and wide to our gaze. No human being was there: the cross remained on the threshold, but Bridget was gone.

THE BETTER.

Weary head and aching eye.
Sank to slumber heavily;
But the mind could not be still,
Wayward thought would have her will,
And within the heated brain
Swiftly sang a thrilling strain,—
"Let thy sleeping sense appear
Word embodied to the ear:
Let the Better be thy theme,
And depict in lively dream
Things that might be, were the wrong
Weaker, or the right more strong,
Thou shalt speak a truer spell
Than Dodona's oracle:

"If the Seeming were the Real,
Life the poet's pure Ideal,
If no hollow words were spoken,
If no honied vows were broken,
If the faithful eye's revealing
Spake the gentle spirit's feeling,
And on eyes that look not kindness
Fell the penal curse of blindness,
If the short-sight could be lengthened,
If the weak-sight could be strengthened,
If the squint-eyed straightly saw,
If the true and just were law,
If to straighten crooked things
Were the strength and joy of kings,
If desert were still rewarded,
Wealth and favour unregarded,
If the good were o'er the great,
Right o'er might, and love o'er state,—
Then were Time's rich fatness come,
Earth's desired Millennium;
Peace in power would have a brother,
Bliss and Virtue kiss each other;
Under the holy Wisdom's reign
Men would grow divine again."

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

RUSSIANS AT HOME.

This is the order of afternoon—June the month, and two hours past meridian the time. Do you never please yourself in striving to imagine what people are doing thousands of miles away at such and such an exact moment? It must be merry this golden June season in gay Sherwood. Bold Robin Hood has thrown his crossbow by, and feels quite honest, though somewhat a-dry, and is gone to drain a flagon of the best, in the leafiest glade of the wood with that Friar, who is always thirsty. Will Scarlett is determined that his nose shall vie in hue with his name, and is toasting jolly June in the sunshine with Allen-a-Dale, who has got his rebec in fine tune, and carols to it till the birds grow jealous, and think him a very over-rated performer. Midge the Miller is indubitably singing with the best of them, for Midge, though the careful Percy has somehow overlooked the inference, was evidently a Cheshire man, and resided on the banks of the River Dee, where who so jolly as he? As for Little John, at most times rather a saturnine and vindictive outlaw, inciting the dishonest but peaceable Robin to cut off the heads of bishops and pitch them into their graves, in addition to rifling them of their mitres and pastoral rings—Little John is laughing very heartily, in his own misanthropical manner, to think that it is June, and fine weather, and that it will soon be the height of the season for pilgrimages to the wealthy shrines; and Maid Marian—what should or could she be doing in her bower, but weaving many-coloured chaplets and garlands, and singing songs about summer and the roses in June?

So all is merry this June day in my imaginary Sherwood, and in many other real and tangible localities and living hearts my fancy could paint at this moment, far,

far away. This is a merry time, I am sure for some scores of gauzy bonnets with pretty faces behind them; for hampers with many bottles containing something else besides salad mixture; for steamboat decks, for pic-nic turfs, for Kenilworth and Netley ruins, for the bow-window at the Trafalgar, for eight hours at the seaside, for excursion vans, for Sunday school festivals with their many flags and monstrous tea-drinkings; for the man with the trombone, and the gipsies at Norwood and the Saint Sebastianised artillery man at chalky Rosherville; for the solemn chesnut-trees and timid deer of Bushey, and the pert pagoda and shaven lawns of Cremorne; for many thousand happy men and women and children, who are disporting themselves in God's good summer season. I cannot linger further on the delights which mirth can give; but I sum them all up in a presumed Sherwood, and the assumption that it is very merry there. But, I am compelled to confess mournfully, also, that the genuine merriment I can recal is on the wrong side of fifteen hundred miles away, and that it is the very reverse of merry in the month of June in the village of Volnoï Voloschtchok.

Merry! Imagine the merriment of a Cagot village in Bearn in the middle of the Middle Ages; imagine the joviality of the Diamond in Derry, before Kirke's ships broke through the Boom. Imagine the conviviality of a select party of Jews beleaguered in the castle of York, with the king's surgeon-dentists, to the number of some thousands, outside. Imagine the enjoyment of a Rabelais bound to board and lodge with a John Calvin. I think any of these reunions would surpass, in outside gaiety at least, the cheerfulness of a Russian Sloboda, and of the Russians at home therein. As Alexis Hardshellovitch and I emerge from the Starosta's house, and wander up and down the longitudinal gap between the houses, which may, by an extreme stretch of courtesy, be called the main street. I may here mention that the Street, regarded as a thoroughfare, is as yet imperfectly understood in Russia. The monstrous perspectives of St. Petersburg have few imitations in the provinces. There are even traces remaining in modern Moscow of the circular streets of the Wend villages; some of which yet remain in the Altmark, and in the province of Luneborg in Germany, and are common in the purely Sclavonic parts of Russia. The houses are jostled one against the other in a circle, more or less regular, and there is but one opening for ingress or egress. The cause of this peculiar form of construction is doubtless to be traced to the old Ishmaelitish times, when every village's hand was against its neighbour. In many of the Russian governments there are still villages consisting of a single street, closed at one extremity; resembling what in western cities is termed a blind alley. I feel a density of dullness and mental melancholy settling on me in such a place: the houses begin to look like cellular vans; the few trees like gibbets; the birds—the human ones I mean—like gaol-birds; the whole place seems plague-stricken, or panic-stricken, or famine-stricken, or all three at once.

As for "Life," social acceptation of the term, there is not a pinch of it in the whole grey snuffbox of a hamlet. I am not difficult to please as to villages. I don't expect to find green lanes, trim hedges, ivy-grown churches, smiling cottages, rosy children, ponds with ducks, and cows, and sheep, looking as though they had been washed and spruced up for the especial benefit of Mr. Sidney Cooper, R.A., who had sent word he was coming. I don't expect to find these things, as a matter of course, anywhere but in an English village. I have seen some of the dullest, dreariest, ugliest villages under the sun in France and Germany and Belgium. The clean village of Brock is not so clean as it is, and much more hideous than it might be; and I am given to understand that an American "Shaker" village is calculated, for gloominess in aspect and deficiency in the picturesque, to "whop all creation" quite hollow. Still, I am inclined to think that a village peopled by primitive Puritans, who had espoused the deceased wives' sisters' husbands' wives of Mormon elders, and had afterwards been converted to the Shaker way of thinking, must be a community of roaring prodigals compared to the inhabitants of Volnoï.

Beyond the watch-tower, there is not one building to give individuality to the village, or any sign of communal organisation. The Starosta's house is two or three sizes larger than its fellows; the only other hut that may be called a public building is the granary, which is a barn of considerable size; but houses and barns are all alike—all littered at one farrow by one inexorable grey, dull, dingy, timber-bristled sow. The very poorest moujik's house is the diminished counterpart of the reputedly wealthy Starosta's dwelling. There is nowhere any sign of the humblest decoration, the feeblest attempt at porch or summer-house building, or parasitical-shrub training, or painting, or whitewashing, or even paling-pitching. There is not a bench before a door; but it must be admitted that over each doorway there is a rough-fir board, on which is branded rather than painted, in red and white, the rudest resemblance of a bucket, a hatchet, a saw, a ladder, a coil of ropes, and similar implements. These Egypto-Cherokee implements mean that the dwellers in the doorways are respectively bucket-men, hatchet-men, saw-men, and so forth; and that, in case of fire, they are bound to provide these implements, and to do suit and service with them to their Barynn towards the extinction of the conflagration. If I want to see cottage porches and trailing plants, Alexis

tells me, I must go to Ekaterinoslaf, some hundreds of versts off, or to the (said to be) smiling villages in the governments of Koursk and Woronesch. If I want to see peasants' dwellings otherwise than in this interminable grey garb, I must visit the Slobodas of wealthy and puissant seigneurs—the Orloffs, Demidoffs, and Tchérémetieffs, where the houses are painted in all the colours of the rainbow; where the Starosta's house has a garden before and a garden behind, and where there is positively a church whose timbered sides are painted without, and plastered within, and whose dome and cupolas are daubed the brightest blue, and bespangled with stars in burnished copper. Not this for Volnoï. Here all is grey; yet it is far from the sort of place where Beranger's Merry little grey fat man would elect to take up his abode. Road, and palings, and scant herbage, and stones, and houses are all of the exact tint of modeller's clay. One longs not for the darling green of English scenery, for that is hopeless and unattainable, but for even the yellow smeared houses of eastern towns, or the staring white of French villages. There is but one variation in hue,—far up above where the sun dwells; and there it is indeed a hot and copper sky, and the sun at noon is bloody. But the great master of light and shade disdains to throw Volnoï into chiaro-oscuro. He will parch, and wither, and blaze up its surface with a uniformly-spread blast of burning marl; but he will give it no dark corners, no chequered lights—no Rembrandt groves of rich brown—no Ostade diamond touches of pearly brilliancy.

There is so deeprooted a want of confidence in the quicksand-like soil of Russia on the part of the dwellers in towns, as well as those who abide in the country, that the foundations of the houses reach far above the earth. In St. Petersburg, indeed, the basement of every house is vaulted, like the bullion offices at the Bank of England. But in villages such as this, precautions have been taken to prevent the poor timber house being blown away, or tumbling to pieces, or falling head over heels, or sinking right through the rotten earth, and coming out at the antipodes. By a species of compromise between the dog-kennel, the hen-roost, and the pigeon-cote styles of architecture. the houses are themselves perched upon blocks of granite,—a material common enough in this country, and admirably suited to the sculpture of monoliths to great men, were there any great men in it to raise monoliths to. En attendant, they raise statues to the rascals. There is naturally between the planks of the ground-floor, and the ague-steeped, malaria-emitting marshy ground beneath, a space some fourteen inches in height, and this space is a hothouse for foul weeds, a glory-hole for nameless filth and rubbish, and a perpetually fresh field and pasture new for saurian reptiles and elephantine vermin. The houses forming the oulitza, or street, are not contiguous. They are detached villa residences, with irregular intervals, offering prospects of grey dust-heaps and copper sky. But with not so much as a clothes' pole which a Jonah could sit under with the hope that he might be overshadowed by a gourd in the morning.

No shops. Shops are a feature of village life not yet understood in a Russian sloboda. Even in government towns of some pretensions—even in the Gorods—where there are two or three churches to every hundred inhabitants—shops for the sale of the commonest necessaries of life are woefully scanty in number. There are some houses (in the towns) where bread is sold; and in the meanest villages there is the usual and inevitable quota of government dram-shops; but for every other article of merchandise,—whether you desire to purchase it wholesale or retail,—you must go, as in a Turkish town in Asia Minor, or in a Hindostanee cantonment, to the bazar, which is in a Gostinnoï-Dvor on the smallest, seediest, rag-shoppish scale, but called by the same high-sounding name, and which is as much the centre of sale and barter transactions, as though it were either one of the stately edifices in which the buyers and sellers of St. Petersburg the heathen, and Moscow the holy, spend or gain their millions of roubles. There is no Gostinnoï-Dvor, of course, in such petty villegiaturas as Volnoï, and the happy villagers effect their little marketings in this wise. The major proportion of the poor food they eat, they produce themselves. The coarse grain they and their cattle fodder on is either garnered in their own bins behind their own hovels, or is drawn, under certain restrictions, and in stated rations—(in times of scarcity)—from the common granary. Though small their village home, the Imperial government, in its wisdom and mercy, and bent on comforting its people, has thrown the ill boding shadow of its eagle wings over a noisome shebeen of a vodki-larka, or grog-shop, where, on high days and holidays, the children of the Czar may drink themselves as drunk as soot, without fear of punishment: and where, on non-red letter days, they get drunk with no permission at all—and are duly sobered by the stick afterwards. For raiment, the women weave some coarse fabric for common wear, and spin some sail-clothlike linen; as for calicoes and holiday garments, the Starosta and the Bourmister are good enough to make that little matter right for the people between them. They clothe the naked, for a consideration, and in their beneficence take payment in the smallest instalments for the goods supplied, but woe to the moujik or the baba who is behindhand in his or her little payments to those inexorable tallymen.

For, the chief prop or basis of the municipal authority is, of course, the Holy Stick; whose glorious, pious, and immortal memory, will, no doubt, be drunk by Russian tories of the old school, and with nine times nine, a century hence. As I intend hereafter to speak of the H. S. in its institutional point of view, and to show that, like the tchinn, it has a pyramidal and mutually cohering and supporting formation; I have only to hint, in this place, that the happy villagers get an intolerable amount of it, both from the Bourmister and the Starosta. The Bourmister is the great judge—Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus combined—under the Pluto of this Tartarus, the absent M. de Katerichassoff. The Bourmister has power to order his adjoint the Starosta, for all his long beard and venerable aspect, to undergo the discipline of the stick; he has the power to order the Starosta's great-grandmother to be flogged; were it possible for that old lady to be alive. The young men of the village, the young maidens thereof, the children, and the idiots, and the sick people, can all at the word of command from the north German intendant, be lashed like hounds; or, at his pleasure, he can send them—thirty miles distance, if he chooses—to a police-station, with a little note to the nadziratelle or polizie-kapitan; which note is at once honoured by that functionary, who takes care that, as far as there is any virtue in the battogues or split-canes, the person entitled to receive the amount of toco for which the bill is good, shall have no cause to complain of the police rate of discount. Discount! the generous nadziratelle will oftimes give the moujik an odd dozen for luck.

The Bourmister's authority, then, is almost as awful and irresponsible as that of the captain of a man-of-war thirty years ago (the nearest approach to the Grand Seigneur I can think of), and he can order the gratings to be rigged, and the hands to be turned up for punishment, whenever things are not going shipshape, or he is out of temper. The Starosta more closely resembles the boatswain. He has no special authority, under the articles of war, to beat, but he does most consumedly. The Bourmister can cause any slave man or woman to be stripped, tied up, and flogged; but he does it officially, and with a grim mocking semblance of executing justice. The Starosta kicks, cudgels, punches, and slaps—not officially, but officiously. The one state of things resembles the punishment inflicted by Dr. Broomback, the schoolmaster,—the other, the thrashing administered by the fourth-form boy to his fag. But there is not much to choose between the two inflictions, as far as the amount of pain suffered. The dorsal muscles are as easily contused by the bully-boy's hockey-stick as by the schoolmaster's cane; and a whip, as long as it is a whip, will hurt, whether it be wielded by a police-corporal, or by a brutal peasant.

Among a people so constantly beaten as are the Russians, it would naturally be expected that whenever the beaten had the power, they would become themselves the beaters, and that their wives and children, their cattle and domestic animals would lead a terrible time of it. This is not the case. Haxthausen, with an apologetic shrug for the abominations of the stick régime, says, "Tout le monde donne des coups en Russie," and goes on to say that, the father beats his son, the husband his wife, the mother her daughter, the child his playfellow, and so forth. I am thoroughly disinclined to believe this. From all I have seen of the common people, they appear to treat each other with kindness and forbearance. A father may occasionally pitch into his drunken son; but the Russians at home are far removed from being systematically violent and cruel. There is this one grand protection to the married ladies, that the Russian husband when drunk, is, instead of a tiger, the most innocent of ba-a lambs. It never by any chance occurs to him to jump upon the wife of his bosom, or to knock her teeth down her throat, or to kneel on her chest, or to chastise her with a poker. When most drunk he is most affectionate. We have all of us heard the stock Russian story, stating it to be the custom for a Russian bride to present her future lord and master with a whip on the wedding-day, and to be afterwards known to express discontent if her husband was lax in the exercise of the thong on her marital shoulders. Such an event, I have good reason to believe, is as common in Russia as is the sale of a wife in Smithfield, and with a halter round her neck, among us in England. Yet Muscovite husbands will lie quite as long under the imputation of wife-whipping as the English husbands do under the stigma of wife-selling, and as unjustly. In this case the saddle is placed on exactly the wrong horse. A Russian peasant has really no objection to sell his wife; and for a schtoff or demi-John of vodki will part with his Tatiana or Ekateriana cheerfully. The Englishman will not barter away his moiety, but he keeps her, and bruises her. To their horses and cattle the Russians are singularly merciful, preferring far more to drive them by kind words than by blows. In general, too, the women seem to treat the babies and little children with all desirable kindness and affection; the only exceptional case I can recal was narrated to me by a Russian gentleman, who told me that in some villages of the government of Tchernigoff there was a perfect epidemic among the women (only) for beating their children; and that they were in the habit of treating them with such ferocious brutality, that the severest punishments had to be applied to the unnatural parents, and in many cases the children had to be

separated from them. I must state, to whichever point of the argument it may tend, that my informant was himself a slave-owner; and I am the more bound to make the statement, because I have frequently heard similar stories of the almost inexpressible cruelties of slave-mothers to their children, from slave-owners from the southern states of America. It is a curious circumstance, although quite foreign to the analogy sought to be here conveyed, that the village of L'Estague, near Marseilles, which was originally colonised in the old Roman time, bears at this day a precisely identical disreputation for the cruelty of the mothers towards the children.

The picture of a Russian village and Russians at home, without a portrait of the institution which serves the Muscovite moujik for inglenook, cooking-range, summer siesta-place, winter bed, wardrobe, gossiping-place, and almost sole comfort, and alleviator of misery—the Peetch, or stove—would be an imposture. I want the limner's and wood-engraver's aid here, desperately; but, failing that, I must go to my old trade of paper-staining, and word-stencilling, and do my best to draw the peetch with moveable types and printer's ink.

The Russian aristocratic stove, white, sculptured, monumental, gigantic, is like the sepulchre of some great man in an abbey, which has been newly restored and beautified. The Russian popular—I dare not for my ear's sake say democratic—stove is, without, wondrously like an English parish church with a flat roof. And the model is not on so very small a scale either; for I have seen stoves in Russian houses, which, as a Shetland pony is to a Barclay and Perkins' Entire horse, might be compared in magnitude to that smallest of parish churches—St. Lawrence's in the Isle of Wight. The stove, like the church has a square tower, on whose turret pigeons coo; a choir and aisles, a porch and vestry. It is a blind church, having no windows; but it has plenty of doors, and it has vaults beneath its basement, where unsightly bodies do lie. The stove stands sometimes boldly in the middle of the principal apartment, as a church should do in the centre of its parish; sometimes it is relegated against one of the walls, three parts of whose entire side it occupies. The stove has a smoke-pipe, through which the fumes of the incandescent fuel pass (but not necessarily) into a chimney, and out of a chimney-pot. But anywhere out of the house is thought quite sufficient, and the chimney-pot may be up-stairs or down-stairs, or in my lady's chamber, so long as the smoke has a partial outlet somewhere. I say partial; for smoke has odd ways of curling up and permeating through odd nooks and corners, and pervading the house generally. It comes up through chinks of the floor in little spirals; it frays in umbrella-like gusts from the roof-tree; it meets you at the door, and looks out of the window; so that you can seldom divest yourself of the suspicion that there must be something smouldering somewhere which will blaze out shortly—which there frequently is, and does. Now for the peetch in its entirety. Keep the ecclesiastical image strongly in your mind; for here is the high square tower, and there the long-bodied choir and aisles. But you are to remember that the peetch is composed of two separate parts of separate nationalities. The long body is simply, the old Russian stove—a hot sarcophagus—a brick coffin with fire matter within, like that of a dead man who burns before his time. This simple brick vault full of combustion, dates from the earliest period of authentic Muscovite research. It is the very same stove that was used in the days of Rurik, and the Patriarch Nikon, and Fedor-Borissovitch. It is the very same stove, that the most savage of savage tribes would almost intuitively construct,—a hole dug in the ground, a framework of branches, the food and fuel placed upon it, and the whole covered in with a roof of boughs and clay plastered over it. Not that boughs, or branches, or wet clay, enter into the architecture of the actual Russian stove; but the principle is the same. And I am not covertly insisting on the barbarism of the Russian people because their stove is so simple. What is our famous and boasted Register Stove, or Rippon and Burton's improved grate, but a hole in the wall, with a fire-receiver uniting the capacities of an elliptical St. Lawrence's gridiron and a distorted bird-cage? What is the French fire-place but a yawning cavern, with logs on dogs, in the most primitive style of adjustment? What is the French poêle, or stove, but a column of St. Simeon Stylites, with a pedestal rather too hot for the feet of the saint, and an iron tail curling the wrong way? What is the Belgian stove, which advances so impertinently into the very middle of your chamber, but a lady's work-table in cast-iron, and with bandy legs. What is the German stove but a species of hot-pump, insufferably conceited and arrogant—turning up its white porcelain nose in a corner of the room, and burning timber living, I may so call it, at the rate of two Prussian dollars a-day? There is, indeed, a stove I love; a fire-place, which combines mental improvement and instruction with the advantages of physical warmth and light. This is the fire-place whose sides are lined with the old Dutch tiles. In glorious blue and white, there were on these tiles depicted good and moving histories. Joseph was sold to his brethren on these tiles; Ananias came to a bad end, together with his wife Sapphira, for saying the thing that was not; the Good Samaritan left a cerulean twopence at a smoke-dried inn; and jolly Squire Boaz met Ruth a gleaning, and at once inspired a

Hebrew poet to write the most charming pastoral in the world, and inspired an Irish copyist to compose the libretto of the opera of "Rosina." There are no fireplaces with Dutch tiles now. I have been in Holland; and, in their rooms, they have register stoves, and Simeon Stylites' columns. I can forgive almost that Dutch-built King of England who threw our Art back half a century—I mean William the Third—who spoilt the Tower of London, introduced the cat-o'-nine-tails into the English navy, would never go to the theatre, and wouldn't let his gentle wife have any green peas, for the one and simple fact that it was in his reign that fire-places with Dutch tile-linings became common in England. From these fire-places, with their white and blue Scripture stories, little Philip Doddridge and little Sam Wesley learnt, at their mothers' knees, lessons of truth and love and mercy. There are no Doddridges and Wesleys to expound to us now. Doddridge is a dean with two thousand a year, busily occupied in editing Confucius and defending bad smells; and Wesley is a clown who sings a sacred Tippetywitchet in a music-hall where people are killed. Least of all I am entitled to accuse the Russians of uncivilisation in their stone building, seeing that their method of keeping the burning game alive is nearly identical with the process adopted by the shepherds on the melancholy downs of Hampshire and Sussex. The Corydon with the crook, and with the ragged smock-frock and the eight shillings a week, takes Monsieur Hedgehog, covers him up with clay—how Russian!—sticks him in a hole in the ground, which he fills up with fire, and then covers that up with clay and turf again; and capital eating—hot, succulent, and gravy-yielding, is this same Signor Hedgehog, when you dig him out of the clay again. Such a hedgehog dinner with a shepherd on a lonely down, a wise dog sitting about two yards off, now sniffing the hot regale, and sententiously anticipatory of bones and fragments, now wriggling that sapient nozzle of his in the ambient air as if his scent were seven-league reaching, and he could smell out mutton misbehaving itself miles off, now casting a watchful back-handed eye—I mean by the misnomer, when the optic is cast back by a half-upwards, half-sideways jerk of the head—upon the silly sheep—silly enough to eat their perpetual salad without asking for Doctor Kitchener's mixture; silly enough to be made into continual chops without remembering that there is many a ram who is more than a match for a man. Such a noontide meal—a grey sky above, and a neutral tint in the perspective, discreet silence during the repast, monosyllabic conversation and a short pipe afterwards—is a most philosophical and instructive entertainment. The edge is rather taken off the Aristotelian aspect of the encounter when the shepherd, like the needy knife-grinder, asks you for sixpence for a pot of beer, to drink your honour's health in.

On the long body of the stove, the Russian peasant dozes in summer, and sleeps without disguise in winter. When his miserable life is over they lay him out—that is, they pull his legs, and try to uncrisp his fingers, and tie his jaw up with a stocking, and put a copeck on each eyelid, and press a painted image to his senseless lip, and place an iron trencher, with bread and salt in it, on his breast, and don't wash him—on the stove; if there happen to be a scarcity of tables in the mansion. On the top of the stove the mother makes her elder children hold down her younger children to be beaten—it is almost as convenient for that purpose as the bench in the yard of a police-gaol; on the top of the stove, Ivan Ivanovitch and Dmitri Djorjevitch lean on their elbows with beakers of quass, and saucers full of salted cucumbers between them, disputing over knavish bargains, making abstruse calculations upon their inky-nailed fingers with much quickness, taking the name of their Lord in vain to prove the verity of assertions to which Barabbas is one party and Judas the other; and ultimately interchanging dirty rags of rouble notes, with grins and shrugs, and spittings, and crossings. I have previously had occasion to remark that the only test exercised by the uneducated Russians, as regards the value of a bank-note, is in its colour. The fifty-rouble note is grey; the twenty-five rouble note, violet; the ten ditto, red; the five ditto, blue; the three ditto, green; lastly, the one-rouble note is a yellowish brown. You frequently hear a moujik say, "I earned a blue yesterday;" "he has stolen a red;" "he lost a brown," &c. A monetary dispute between two Russians frequently concludes by the disputants embracing, and mutually treating each other to liquor; in such a case, you may be perfectly certain that both parties—A and B—have made a good thing of it; but that some third party, not present,—say C—has been most awfully robbed, swindled, and cozened in the transaction. On the flat roof of the stove, finally, the Russian peasant is supposed to pass the only happy period of his life: that of his dozing slumbers. And it is positively—I have heard it from all sorts of differently actuated informants, hundreds of times—a standard and deeply rooted impression or superstition with the moujik, call it which you will, that while he is in dreamland, he really walks and talks, and eats and drinks, and loves, and is free, and enjoys himself; and that his waking life—the life in which he is kicked, and pinched, and flogged, and not paid—is only an ugly nightmare, which God in his mercy will dispel some day.

Rashly have I said that the top of the stove is the only place (saving the vodki shop; that

exception is always to be assumed) where the Russian peasant can enjoy himself. At the bottom of the peetch, likewise, can he enjoy the dulce desipere in loco. For, as between the floor of the outer house itself and our mother earth there is an open basement, or glory hole, so between the bottom of the stove and the flooring there is also a longitudinal cavity; some fourteen inches high, perhaps, and some five feet and a-half long; the depth of course, corresponding to that of the peetch, which is ordinarily about forty inches wide at the top. Within this cavity, on ordinary days, odd matters are thrust—immondices of every description, broomsticks, buckets, and coils of rope. It is the sort of cavity where ravens might establish a joint-stock bank for savings, and rob each other, as directors and shareholders, dreadfully. I have passed over the standing armies of vermin, who—if it be not inconsistent to say so—lie there armed cap-à-pie. But once a-week, Ivan Ivanovitch, the moujik, having divested himself of every article of clothing, crawls into this longitudinal cavity, and there lies till he is half-suffocated. On emerging from this oven, the Baba Tatiana, his wife, douses him with pails of hot-water, till he is half-drowned. He speedily re-enters into his clothes, which have been neatly baking in the front part of the stove, to kill the vermin; and this is the Russian bath. If the fortunate moujik be a starosta, or at all removed from the usual abject poverty, he will have, in lieu of this, a sort of hot-brick kennel built in his back-yard, by the side of his pigstye and his dung and dust heap; and this, with a small antechamber for dousing purposes, forms his vapour-bath. The hole under the stove, however, and the hot-water pail afterwards, with a bucket of nice cold water occasionally, are the most popular components of a Ruski banyi, or Russian bath. Baking wearing apparel, in order to divest it of its animated lining, was, I was inclined to think before I visited Russia, a device confined to our English gaols and houses of correction. The first intimation I had of the practice being to the manner born in Muscovy, was apropos of a tea-party. The lady of the house where I was fortunate enough to receive that pleasant hospitality had sent her little boy out for some tea-cakes; and as the Russian high-priced flour is the best in the world, and the Esthonian and Livonian bakers, who almost monopolise the baking trade in St. Petersburg, are most cunning in their art, the substitutes for Sally Lunns are delicious. The little boy came back betimes with a bag of tea-cakes, and a very pale and frightened face, and being questioned, said that he had wandered, through curiosity, into the bake-house, and that there was a man's head in the oven. He was sure it was a head, he reiterated, because he wore a hat. Whereupon a Russian gentleman who was present burst out into loud laughter, and deigned to explain to us that, among us gens du peuple it was a common custom to send a hat to the bakers when the little animals signifying love, who boarded and lodged within it, became too troublesome. I know that the horrible story spoilt my appetite for Sally Lunns that evening, and my tea too, though it was of the very best—from Poudachoff's, and cost eight roubles a-pound.

Now for a word concerning the square church-tower. This is called the Poêle Hollandaise, or Amsterdam stove, and was brought from the land of dykes and dams by the all-observant Peter the Great. Breast high in this Amsterdam stove, is the ordinary continental cooking-apparatus, with circular cavities for the saucepans and bain-mari pans, should he happen to possess any. Underneath, at about six inches height from the ground, is the range of family vaults; a longitudinal tunnel extending the entire length of the stove, and heating the whole fabric. This is filled, every other day or so, with logs of timber, chopped to about the size of an English constable's police baton. The apertures of the stove are left open until this fuel attains a thoroughly red heat, and no more gas can be emitted; all is then carefully closed up. The stove is, in fact, nothing but a brick brazier of charcoal; but I am almost willing to believe, as the Russians proudly boast, that they have some peculiar art and secret in the construction of stoves; for I have never heard of any cases of asphyxia through their use. The samovar, too, which is apparently a most deadly piece of copper-smithery, is usually found to be innoxious; though I cannot help thinking that either a Russian stove or a Russian tea-urn would very soon make cold meat of a small tea-party in Western Europe. When the fuel is out in the long tunnel, and pending a fresh supply, then is the time for the thrifty Baba, or moujik's housewife, to bake the rye-bread. She is quite ignorant of the use and appliance of the domestic spatula, or baker's peel. She pokes the bread in with a broomstick, and fishes it out with a long instrument, which, for a long time, I considered to be a mere agricultural stimulant to hay, to wit, a pitchfork, but which I was afterwards told was specially devoted to the removal of the bread from this primitive oven.

WHAT IS TO BECOME OF CHATHAM?

We have it in our minds to utter certain speculations on the death of Chatham, not the Chatham of the British parliament, who is dead; but the Chatham of the dockyard. The conservancy of the rivers Thames and Medway is in the hands of the Lord Mayors of London. Once in seven years, a Lord Mayor and a crew of aldermen dine in a barge during a trip to Rochester by water. They dine to see that there is water in both rivers;

and, perhaps, to hear something about mud in the mouth of one of them. Such a visit, in the first week of last August, was made and in a daily newspaper it stands recorded thus:—

Official Visit of the Lord Mayor to Rochester.—During the progress of the Lord Mayor up the Medway, the attention of his lordship was particularly directed to the state of the shore and banks of the river; which, in several places, are fast being carried away by the action of the tide, and which at no distant period of time threatens to form a serious impediment to the navigation of the river.

In an earlier number of the same newspaper we find also this piece of intelligence:

Admiralty Inspection, Chatham Dockyard.—Their lordships inspected a fine new slip which, when finished, will improve that part of the yard. The new wharf-wall extends more than two hundred feet farther into the bed of the river than the old wharf-wall. It is also intended to make more improvements in the same direction extending to the mast-house, where the gain from the river will be at least a hundred yards, now covered with a deposit of mud. There is near this an old slip, formerly used for building the twelve-gun brigs, which is so far inland that it is to be taken down, &c. &c.

Thus three years ago they were building Chatham dockyard out, in order to get into the river; and, the deposit of mud, rendering this proceeding necessary, was still going on in August last, as our former citation shows. Every year makes the matter worse, and the Lord Mayor as conservator of Thames and Medway, who

> Should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
> But he should think of shallows and of flats,

surrounded at home by his own shallows and flats of the City Corporation, has other mouths to think about than the mouth of the Medway. Besides, can aldermen believe it matter of complaint, touching a river, that its mouth is filled?

Now, a river is of use in several ways:—as a harbour, as a highway, as a receptacle for fry, and as a drain. We are bound to confess that the fish have always been matter of special care to corporate conservancies, and nobody can accuse the London Corporation of having overlooked the use of the Thames as a sewer.

English rivers as they fall towards the sea, usually expand into tidal estuaries; and, at some point on each, a town or city has come into existence, the prosperity of which depends upon the maintenance of deep water in the harbour, or at its mouth. The government of such estuaries has, until recently, been confided to the corporations of the respective ports, and the general result of their administration has been, that the rich and proud Cinque Ports have become, except Dover and Hastings, half-inland villages, dull, grey, and desolate. This ruin and decay is brought about in several ways;—by the growth of shingle beaches across their harbour-mouths, and by the diminution of the estuaries from natural causes. The towns, having become poor as the ports grew shoal, were sometimes also subject to the ravages of French invasions.

Doubtless, the most important of these several agencies has been the inning, or embanking of the tidal levels; and it is a subject well deserving the attention of the legislature, and appropriate to a time when the conservancy of the Thames and Medway is about to form, as it should have done centuries ago, a topic of domestic interest. The action of a river when passing through flat and unembanked land is to wear away its banks, both by the action of the tide, and by the lippering of the waves. As time runs on, a small stream will, in favourable circumstances, wear for itself a great tidal basin. Then follows a period when, by judicious walling, the banks may be sustained, a tidal channel governed, and a blessing made secure to large communities, enjoyable both for the present and the future.

Much disaster has arisen from the want of system in the conduct of such works as these; and another calamity is now present before us, the consequence of our own negligence in having allowed embankments to decay.

The Romans were the originators of the system of inning in this country; and wherever any remnant of their work is found throughout our marsh districts, it evinces the energy and enterprise which stamped even their colonial undertakings. Thus, in Romney Marsh, they flung a wall at one sweep around twenty-five thousand acres. Some remains of their walls have been found, it is said, in the embankments about Greenwich. At Higham, on the North Kent Railway, is a noble causeway, over which they were wont to lead traffic to Colchester; and there can be little doubt that they walled portions of the Medway.

After their era, single proprietors, the churches and monasteries, became the great workers at this task, and on a very large scale. The Church of Canterbury and the Abbey of St. Augustin's working in the region between Thanet and the mainland; and, on the river Thames, the monasteries of Barking and Lesnet, about Erith. Lands so taken in without method, were found to interfere very much with one another as to drainage; a necessity in such low-lying places. Commissions seem, therefore, to have been instituted for the double purpose of sustaining walls, and of caring for the drains or sewers. Here and there such arrangements exist still, and fulfil their intention: but, in other important localities, no such happy event has ensued, and there has resulted little but disaster.

The annals of the port of Sandwich leave one convinced that the decay of that harbour

resulted from the vigorous works of the Canterbury Churches. There was no lack of enactments by the different mayors of Sandwich on this vital matter. So early as fourteen hundred and sixty-seven, the dredgers of oysters within the haven were ordered not to throw back into the water any stones they might draw up. Through succeeding centuries, the complaint of the people of Sandwich was continual respecting the loss of their harbour. They begged of kings and queens, and even assessed themselves in vain. The loss of back-water, and of consequent scower to keep deep-water, made of their former sea-port a poor, ill-conditioned, inland town. It has been reserved for the Corporation of London to display the consequences of inaction, in the other extreme: it has, in the course of centuries, suffered the whole valley of an estuary to be eaten up.

The scene of destruction is not forty miles from London; and the ruin is made manifest, to anyone who will take boat from Sheerness to Chatham. In one part of this river the breadth from land to land is something like four miles. Its margins are composed of a wilderness of islands, intersected by tidal inlets, creeks, ditches, waterways of indescribable kinds, all of them tidal, teeming with rottenness. It will not surprise the traveller to be informed that here was Stangate Creek, the naval health establishment for many years.

There can be no doubt that this configuration of country is the consequence of suffering the river to put in, or encroach on the embanked lands. The islands on the Admiralty charts number some two hundred, and are almost entirely produced by the land having been enclosed and drained; the outer wall once breached, the very system of ditches is sufficient to convert a piece of such land into a series of islands; the ditches become tidal; the severance of one block of land from another is constantly made wider by the action of the water; and the land throughout a large valley, covered with this network of corroding watercourses, wastes at all points. Already its case is hopeless; the whole basin of a valley about ten miles long and five miles wide at its greatest breadth, is, in the language of the district, "gone to sea."

It is a pity, certainly, that there should be such loss of land, from sheer neglect, in Kent, the Garden of England, as we call it. It is not well to show a stranger thousands of acres upon which we should see golden crops waving and cattle feeding, now dressed with the mud of last night's tide, and bearing nothing more than samphire, thrift, and wormwood. The isolation of the land upon the islands renders it all but valueless. The difficulty of getting cattle upon such ground is considerable, and a high water will capriciously come every now and then, which stops its rising only when the foot of the surrounding hills is reached. Even the spring-tides rise high enough to wet the grass and flavour with salt the coarse weeds which thrive there. Such is the desolation of the islets, that they are mowed by people who come down from the towns in boats—men who are not tenants or owners of the lands; yet openly carry away their produce.

At either end of this slushy estuary we have a royal dockyard—Chatham at the upper, and Sheerness at the lower extremity. The duty of conservating this royal harbour has been suffered to repose in the hands of the Corporation of the city of London; once in seven years the Lord Mayor for the time being, comes hither attended by a rout of citizens to bump the bounds of his charge. No other keeping has the king's highway of Medway had from the city of London within record. Once a-year the Lords of the Admiralty arrive on their tour of inspection to the dockyards, and these surveys provide matter for such newspaper paragraphs as we began by quoting.

Twice during the present century has the attention of the government been drawn to the state of the Medway, and the desperate prospects of the dockyard of Chatham. The reply which has been vouchsafed is the notice of the new improvements as to the extension of the slip-ways, and, more recently, it has been advertised that the convicts are in course of removal from Woolwich, and that their labour is to be employed for the construction of a steam-basin there.

The beginning of all conservancy in navigable rivers is judicious embanking, and we have not at this moment the basis of any general measure to effect that object. The end of skilled embanking is the production and sustentation of deep water in the channel, and yet we shall hear that this is in progress on the Irawaddy, if need be, before anything has been done to preserve Sheerness and Chatham from extinction as waterside towns.

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KING MISSIRIE.

THE traveller who, proceeding to Constantinople, lands close to the mosque at Tophana, should wend his steps up the hill that leads to the European quarter and the embassies. On the summit of this hill he will discover the principal seat of the government that he seeks. He will recognise it by a banner, constantly displayed, bearing the simple legend: Hotel d'Angleterre, par J. Missirie.

Disguises are natural to the East. Let no rash stranger, therefore, presume to despise Missirie on account of outward semblance, or think to brave his power because he follows the example of Haroun-al-Raschid. Giafar and Mesrour are at hand: the mutes, be sure, are in waiting with ready bowstring. Cross the threshold of his abode with humble gesture; wait for a propitious moment before laying at his feet your petition for leave to remain within the walls; conciliate the queen-consort with honied and flattering words; communicate to her the last intelligence from the countries through which you have travelled; render to her, as a votive offering, a copy of the Illustrated London News. Then, if the realm be tranquil, and the subjects obedient; if the entrance-lobby be not under martial law, nor the dinner-room in a state of siege; if the tyrant have breakfasted and be at ease; if your face be not too round nor your complexion too sallow; if your air be patient and your language submissive;—it is just possible that you may be granted a favourable audience. It will ensure the enjoyment of many comforts, as well as of sights replete with interest and novelty.

Concerning the growth of Missirie's despotism, there are scarcely any materials for history. Tradition speaks of a period, not very remote, when the house in Pera was simply an hotel for the accommodation of travellers; now it is the seat of an absolute government. It is certain that the change was to some extent gradual, and that the present condition of things was ushered in by a succession of small encroachments upon the liberty and privileges of guests. At what precise time the master-spirit threw off the mask cannot now be ascertained, but I remember when people might be seen, mutinously gathered, by knots of three or four, at the entrance or in the public room, discussing some edict that they deemed oppressive. When the Allies were leaving the Crimea, even such faint insubordination had become a memory of the past. Men as big as Cornet Ames and as brave as Redan Massey—men who had charged through the iron hail of Balaklava and shared in the fierce struggle of Inkermann, were powerless against that which the author of Eöthen has described, Missirie's strangely quiet energy. Men belonging to the same mess, tired—O! how heartily!—of war's alarms, weary of huts and tents, looking forward to a snug gossip at the table d'hôte, were ruthlessly separated by a daily recurring act of tyranny, scattered in all parts of the room by the presiding genius, fluttered like doves by this Constantinopolitan Coriolanus of the western Volscians. Missirie, it was said, was proud of the arrangement of his table; was a student of the picturesque, a comparer of colours, a critic of complexions, an observer of heights, a luxuriator in light and shade. The return of the army afforded him splendid opportunities for appropriate grouping. Unless, therefore, friends or brothers were calculated to produce some particular harmony or contrast that his soul desired, whether in costume or in height, in tinge of whisker or shape of beard, perhaps even in facial outline, they were mercilessly torn asunder. "You, sir, will sit there, and you here," was a dictum from which there was no escape. Damon's black coat was sent to tone down a brilliant uniform; the red jacket of Pythias to give warmth to a group of riflemen. Rebellion was worse than useless. A party of officers, who were among the survivors of Tennyson's six hundred, once tried the effect of a remonstrance, and represented their determination to sit together. What was said to them privately never transpired, but it was effectual. On that great day Missirie came late into the dining-room, and it was observed, with a thrill of consternation among the assembled guests, that he carried a big stick in his hand. Luckily, he had no occasion to employ it: for the light cavalry men were dispersed singly about the table, ruefully regarding distant messmates. The face of

the conqueror relaxed into a gracious smile, and he put away the big stick in a corner.

The arrangements of the table were made, at that time, the centre round which the affairs of the house revolved, and were, moreover, a matter of infinite daily pains and study to the master, who controlled them all. Hence, it will readily be supposed, any wilful disturbance of them was regarded as a high offence against the state, and was invariably visited by the severest penalties. Unexpected arrivals and departures, although unavoidable, and in some sort tolerated, were usually the precursors of storms. For the hardened or deliberate offender, there was no hope of mercy. A man who invited to dinner a friend who didn't come, and who thereby occasioned an empty chair, a sad and offensive hiatus in the line that Missirie had intended to be symmetrical and compact—such a man as this was punished by a fine, representing not only the hotel value of the dinner unconsumed, but also the price of a bottle of the most costly champagne in the cellar. Upon one occasion, the exigencies of the service suddenly withdrew a war-steamer from the Golden Horn, on a day when two of her officers were invited as guests to the table d'hôte. Their would-be entertainer, considerably annoyed at the mulct he had incurred, was led, by an impulse of his nature, to rush into a place which, most certainly, angels would avoid—that is, into Missirie's private room. His eloquent pleadings served only to bring additional wrath upon his head, and to super-impose upon the fine a sentence of perpetual banishment. Missirie thought of the unseemly gap at the table, and forthwith his heart was hardened. There was no appeal from the decision—no possibility of help for the condemned.

Before the sovereign authority so sternly exercised was established upon its present secure and unassailable foundation, Missirie more than once experienced the necessity for a bold and vigorous coup d'état. In such conjunctures he has invariably acted with super-Napoleonic promptitude and decision. The most important of them all, arose out of a difference with a man whom it required no small courage to defy, and no small address to conquer. He was none other than an accredited envoy of perhaps the greatest power in the world, the setter-up and putter-down of authorities, the redresser of wrongs, the remover of nuisances, the harmoniser and leader of the vox populi, the elder brother of the press—the mighty Times. It befell that an ambassador from Printing House Square, whose morning had doubtless been spent for the benefit of folks at home, entered the public room at Missirie's as the clocks were chiming twelve, in order to supply his natural cravings after breakfast. Drawing towards him some of the viands upon the table, he called to the waiter for some coffee.

"M. Missirie has forbidden us, sir, to serve coffee after the clocks have struck noon."

"Beg M. Missirie to have the goodness to make an exception in my favour."

"I am sorry, sir; but M. Missirie makes no exceptions whatever."

The ambassador looked perplexed for a moment, and his mind evidently wavered between submission and resistance. But he remembered one Biffin, who had shortly before been famous in England; and he rose presently from table, with the air of a man sternly conscious of power, yet disposed to be lenient in its exercise. Wait a little, was written on the smile that played around his lips. He walked straight into the private room of the autocrat, and expressed himself something to the following purpose:

"Mr. Missirie, I have just been refused a cup of coffee by your servants. Now, let me give you to know that I will not bear such treatment, that I insist upon having the coffee immediately, and that, if I have any further trouble of this kind, I shall not only withdraw my patronage from your hotel, but I shall make no secret of my reasons for doing so."

The ambassador drew himself up. Missirie looked keenly at him out of half-shut eyes. "I should like to understand you more clearly, sir. Whilst making no secret, is it possible that you will do me the honour to record your sentiments in the Times!"

"It is very possible," replied the ambassador. There was an expression about Missirie that puzzled him.

"Then, I have only to say that I care nothing for your displeasure: and, that I CARE NOTHING FOR THE TIMES! Leave my house, sir, and do me the favour not to return to it."

I remember, in the distant days of my childhood, a certain geographico-historical game, in which arrival at such or such a place entailed upon the player a stoppage during one or more turns of the teetotum, for the assigned purpose of reflecting upon connected events. Even so, at this point of the present narrative, it is worth while to pause, and to consider the pinnacle of greatness to which that man must have attained who cares nothing for the Times, and who ventures to proclaim his carelessness. One Ajax, who defied the lightning, sinks into insignificance by comparison. The Times has humbled pride the most exalted—the Times has pierced through hebetude the most profound. Missirie was in no ignorance of the adversary he contemned; for the Times has planted thorns in the pillow of his nearest and most powerful rival. But by all this he was unmoved. Alone, among the children of men, Missirie cares nothing for the Times!

Too much astonished to reply, the ambassador departed, to seek for food and rest

elsewhere. He had entered upon hostilities without counting the cost; but, for a time, he maintained the conflict gallantly. Day after day, he injured his digestion and acidulated his blood, by such food and wine as are procurable at the second rate hotels of Pera. Night after night, he surrendered himself to the blood-thirsty parasites that, utterly banished by Missirie, seem rather to be encouraged by his neighbours. At length, sickened by dirt, soured by dyspepsia, haggard from sleeplessness, disfigured by bug-bites, he cast about for some means of establishing a truce. He walked boldly, one morning, into the very stronghold of the enemy, into the dining-room of the Hotel d'Angleterre.

"Waiter!"

"Sir."

"I wish to dine here to-day. Keep me a place."

"It is not possible, sir. M. Missirie has given orders that no one shall be permitted to dine in the house who is not staying in it."

Like somebody else, Missirie avait donné ses ordres! It was sublime. It was not only sublime, but a master-stroke of bold and subtle policy, conceived in the very spirit by which Captain Maconochie maintained his sway over the Norfolk Island convicts. Half-a-dozen compatriots, men who had done no wrong, were punished equally with the principal offender; and were impelled to assist in bringing him to submission. The gentleman who had come about the mines, the gentleman who had come about the railway, the gentlemen who had come about the bank, or the coal-pits, were all daily desirous to nourish themselves at Missirie's table; and were all excluded. They hated our own correspondent. They conspired against his peace. They would have liked to hoax him with false intelligence; or to commit his body, in a sack, to the swift current of the Bosphorus. He could pardon their spleen; and could feel some consideration for their undeserved sufferings. Like a sensible man (as he is), he determined to yield where resistance was so vain. Once more he visited the private room, this time with bated breath and trembling accents. Missirie was gracious. The fatted calf was killed with due solemnity. Since that day, the repentant prodigal, who had fed upon husks indeed, has been the greatest ornament of the table to which he was permitted to return; and a seat within hearing of the wit and wisdom which sparkle through his talk, has been the greatest reward in the power of the despot to bestow. It is a boon reserved, of course, for those who have never approached the transgression of an ordinance.

The most despotic monarchs, as we know, have occasionally been thwarted in their wishes, or diverted from their plans, by the superior address and skill of the persons with whom they have had to deal. Scheherazade terminated the cruelties of her lord and master: the shepherd of the Abbot of Canterbury made a mockery of King John. Missirie is human. He too, once met with his match; and was not only defeated, but laughed at.

It is one of the arrangements of the Hotel d'Angleterre that (nearly) every sleeping-room contains two beds; and it was enacted during the war that every person occupying a double-bedded room should be supposed to have a companion, for whom, precisely as for himself, he was compelled to pay; two beds, two breakfasts, two dinners being regularly charged. This afflictive dispensation was not generally approved by those who became subject to it; and a very gallant general, whose portrait may be seen any day in Pall Mall, took special care, immediately upon arriving at Missirie's, to ask for a single-bedded room. He was told that there was none then vacant; and was forced to be content with what he could get. The next morning, before entering the breakfast-chamber, he stood for a while at the outer door, looking upon the street. There chanced to pass one of the most scampish of those polyglot Levantine vagabonds that infest Constantinople; one whose scampishness was not at that time prospering. The compassionate general pitied his forlorn appearance, questioned him of his affairs, and finally invited him to breakfast. Dimitri, abashed, looked at his ragged elbows, and feared a joke at his expense. But the earnestness of the repeated invitation overcame his scruples; and he followed his hospitable entertainer. A step inside the hall, he was collared by a porter in charge of stray luggage; and would have been kicked out instantly, had he not called to the general for assistance.

"A friend of mine," said Sir Colin.

The porter, aghast, rushed into the private room, and mentioned the name of the visitor. His character was sufficiently known to need no description. In a moment Missirie appeared.

In his passion and consternation, in his sudden plethora of ideas, in his eagerness to express them, the great man mixed together, in inextricable confusion, the four or five and twenty languages any one of which, upon ordinary occasions, he can speak with clearness and precision. The result was a harangue, doubtless eloquent; but which speedily went beyond the comprehension of ordinary linguists, into tongues known only to the late Cardinal Mezzofanti, or the present erudite vicar of Broad Windsor. It commenced, fortunately, in French and English.

"Sacré! What is this? Que fait-il cet homme dans la société de Monsieur? Sir! General! What have you done? N'y-a-t-il pas des garçons, des commissionaires, des interprêtes? What do you with this Dimitri, this vagabond, this rascal, this"—— here Missirie glided into Turkish.

At length he stopped, panting.

"A friend of mine, Missirie," repeated Sir Colin. "He will take his breakfast with me, and will most probably dine with me also." Then, drawing his guest nearer to the public room, the general cast back one look towards the discomfited, appalled, almost petrified proprietor. "You see, Missirie," he explained; "Dimitri is the other bed!"

It is hardly necessary to explain at length that Dimitri received compensation in lieu of breakfast, or that Sir Colin slept, that night, in a single-bedded room. Pera rang with the adventure, but Missirie's power was scarcely shaken. Every one felt that his defeat was an achievement of individual genius, not to be imitated or repeated; and few travellers were disposed to enter the lists against a man of such determination and resource. Afterwards, I am inclined to think, he even increased the stringency of his rule over the polloi; and there were some officers, known commonly as the contingent remainders, who seemed to be, in an especial manner, the victims of his tyranny. I heard one of them say that he'd be dashed if he'd stand it; but the spirit excited no answering enthusiasm among those whom he addressed. It was not followed by action, save on the part of Missirie himself, who, it was whispered the next morning, committed the speaker to a double-bedded room.

To a peaceable and quietly-disposed person, like the writer of this article, the Hotel d'Angleterre was a very pleasant place, illustrating all the advantages that Dr. Johnson or any one else could seek for as the peculiar traits of an absolute government. There were many such advantages. Every ukase issued by Missirie, even if dictated by too great lust of power, was directed towards the comfort and welfare of his subjects. His separatist policy, in particular, broke up all those little knots and cliques in which Englishmen so much delight, and rendered table conversation less noisy and more general. It also tended indirectly to prevent excessive drinking, of which the autocrat, not without reason, had great fear and abhorrence. Tipsy men are often quarrelsome, and Missirie's is a quiet and orderly house. Once, it is said, a traveller who was primed with champagne, and whose candour was greater than his discretion, directed the attention of the company to two general officers who were seated opposite him, and publicly intimated that one of them was a blundering old humbug, and the other a Judas Iscariot. People were beginning to lose their awe of general officers in those days, but still this speech produced a scene, and had the effect of hastening coffee for the future. It was not without its influence, perhaps, in developing the tone of authority which Missirie found it expedient to assume in order to keep within bounds the heterogeneous gathering of guests in his house and at his table. Round that table might be seen men of all classes—generals and subalterns, middies and post captains, tourists, speculators, authors. There might be seen men whose chances of action had been suffered to evaporate; and men whose deeds had become an imperishable part of their country's glory. Conspicuous among the habitués, I remember the calm features and thoughtful brow of Colonel Ballard, the defender of Silistria, the brave and sagacious soldier, l'homme sans peur et sans reproche, whose share in one of the most glorious struggles of the war is scarcely known, because of that struggle he was himself the chronicler. Afterwards, in the campaign under the Caucasus, by his watchful care over the comfort and well-being of his men, he contributed, more than any one else has ever done, to impress the common Turks with respect and affection for an Englishman.

Thanks, probably, to the despotic government, there was no lack of ladies at Missirie's. There was one, of ample person and stately presence, who deserves especial mention. She would be content with no less homage than that every gentleman should daily rise from his seat in her sole and individual honour. To this end, she would calmly witness the collective departure of all rival or companion deities; and then, when the last rustle of a silk dress had ceased in the outer room, and when the lords of creation were again cosily settled in their chairs, she would make a solemn noise in her throat, would look around her, would slowly lift herself to a height of nearly six feet, and would commence her progress to the door. Somebody—her son, or brother, or husband—used to follow her as far as the hall, and then return to his wine. Of course we all stood up to witness the ceremonial. The chief performer reminded me of my sister's governess, who was pronounced, long years ago, by a gipsy fortune-teller, to be a comfortable lady, with grand thoughts.

The Hotel d'Angleterre must be a dull place now, affording shelter only to a few tourists, or to stranded commissioners, sick of inaction and longing for home. Probably single-bedded rooms may be obtained, even by those who are not highly-favoured guests; probably the once rigorous discipline is in many points relaxed. But the proprietor has shown powers of governing which discourage the belief that he will acquiesce tamely in the change—that he will fold his hands and say "Ichabod" with resignation. A troubled future is impending over Turkey, and a time may come when the vigour and astuteness of Missirie Pasha shall determine the current of her destiny.

I PROMISE TO PAY.

In the lives of journals and magazines, as in those of more important entities, it is well to look back occasionally, and see what has

occurred in the interval between two epochs,—just to measure the progress which Society has made, and to walk step by step with that singular lady. Now a bank-note will serve as well as anything else as an excuse for so doing. Six years ago, Household Words* told all about the production of those momentous documents: how they were made, where, by whom, how often, in what quantities, how long they lived, and what became of them after death; and in two other numbers of the same volume,† the romance of bank-note forgery was touched upon. But the bank-note has since undergone a marked regeneration, which it behoves us to understand.

Very soon after the publication of the articles just referred to, Mr. Smee, Surgeon to the Bank of England, made a report to the directors, in which he suggested that the time had arrived for adopting the method of printing bank-notes in letter-press fashion, as a substitute for the older plan of copper or steel-plate printing. He based his argument on the assumption that the first-named plan admits of greater rapidity of printing, and more perfect identity in the notes produced. The directors refused to have the general design of the note changed in any material degree; but with this restriction they assented to an extensive and costly series of experiments, intended to test the applicability of surface-printing to these most precious bits of paper. Mr. Henshman and Mr. Coe, the engineer and the superintendent of printing-machines at the Bank, associated themselves with Mr. Smee in this inquiry; and the triumvirate devoted, not merely months, but years, to the investigation of the whole subject. Here and there and everywhere were new inventions and improvements sought; engravers, and paper-makers, and ink-makers, and press-makers, were all brought into requisition to make such changes as the change in the style of printing called for; and, at length, on the first of January, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, the new Bank of England notes made their first bow in the commercial world.

If the reader will refresh his memory concerning the old processes, as described in the article lately adverted to, he will the better be able to understand the changes which have been wrought.

As to the design, it would have been possible, retaining the old pattern, to have engraved it on a copper or steel plate with the device raised instead of sunken; but Mr. Smee, in a paper which he read before the Society of Arts, stated that such a plan would not be practicably effective. In plate-printing, the paper is pressed into the hollows forming the device; but if the device were in raised lines, the plate-press would squeeze the paper over and around the lines, and the ink would spread. If, therefore, the directors insisted on the character of the old design being retained, new artistic and mechanical means became necessary. Comparing a note of the present time with a note two or three years old, it will be seen that the general tone of the design is the same; the Britannia is a little more artistic, but the letters, figures, and flourishes present the same family likeness. In this matter the Bank Directors have remained immoveable. Yet there are not wanting many experienced men who insist strongly on the advantages of a more ornate design. Mr. Henry Bradbury, in a paper recently read before the Royal Institution, contends that the vignette ought to be more sedulously attended to. "The higher the quality of the artistic impress in the vignette, the purer and severer the tone conferred upon its execution, the greater the security of the note. The vignette might be imitated, but its individuality could not. A picture always conveys the style of the artist, exhibiting an individuality of character which no copy can possess. Rival engravers might produce works of similar beauty and general effect, but the differences of manner would be obvious to the commonest observer; and not only would the forgery be discovered, but the hand that had executed it would be discovered." Mr. Bradbury advocates the combination of high artistic excellence in the vignette, with elaborate guilloche or rose-argive work in other parts of the design; he also considers roller-printing to present many advantages over surface-printing for bank-notes; and an art-manufacturer who has produced such beautiful results as the nature-printed plates of ferns and weeds, deserves to be heard on these points. It must, however, be observed that forgers have hitherto imitated the most elaborate engraving sufficiently well to deceive the public. The parti-coloured notes invented by Sir William Congreve, and the intricate beauties of Messrs. Perkins' and Heath's notes have been successfully simulated; because, ninety-nine recipients of bank-notes out of a hundred not being judges of artistic effect, and having no discrimination whatever for the different styles of different artists, are thoroughly deceived by the same general appearance in a forged note that they have been familiar with in a real note, and take even imperfect imitations of it quite as readily. Long familiarity with one form of inscription and one style of ornament is the best preventive against forgery. We therefore incline to the view of the Bank directors, that it is change of style and manner which is more to be dreaded than mediocrity of execution.

The design of the existing Bank of England note was made up and engraved on many small pieces of copper, and brass, and steel, according to the quality and minuteness of the engraving; the lines of the device

* Vol I. p. 426, Review of a Popular Publication.
† Pages 555, 615.

being raised instead of sunken. From the model thus made, a mould was to be obtained. Here came a marked change from the old system. Until the year eighteen hundred and thirty-seven, the device was engraved on a copper or steel-plate, and the notes were printed from that plate by the ordinary copper-plate process; from thence till eighteen hundred and fifty-four, the method of Messrs. Perkins and Heath was adopted (as described in our former article), whereby the device is transferred, by intense pressure, from steel dies to steel plates; but, in our day, the wonderful electro-metallurgic process comes into requisition. The original, or model, the result of a large amount of patient ingenuity and careful engraving, is immersed in one of Mr. Smee's platinised silver voltaic batteries, such as are used in the preparation of copper-plates for the Ordnance Maps; and there it remains, until a film of copper has been deposited upon it thick enough to bear handling, and having the device in intaglio instead of relief. The chemical and galvanic arrangements of the apparatus are so managed, as to produce a copper deposition of a certain definite quality, the metal having a degree of ductility which would admit of one pound of it being drawn out into a mile and three-quarters of wire. The film thus produced is not the plate to be printed from: it is only a mould, from which a cast is to be taken. This cast is obtained by the same electro-metallurgic process as that which has produced the mould itself: the mould instead of the model being dipped into the battery. As a natural consequence, the film now deposited will have the device in relief instead of intaglio; and this film, when backed up and strengthened by a thick plate of solder or other metal, forms the plate from which bank-notes are printed. One mould will yield an indefinite number of casts; one model will yield an indefinite number of moulds; and thus it happens that, however rapidly the plates may become worn out by printing, one engraved model or original will suffice for countless millions of notes. But this will only apply to a note of one particular denomination, and issued from one office; any change in the device or the note renders an entirely new model necessary. Now there are nine denominations of notes issued by the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street (£5, £10, £20, £50, £100, £200, £300, £500, £1000); and as there are branches of the parent establishment—children of the Old Lady—at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Newcastle, Leicester, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Hull, and elsewhere, and as each of these issues its own notes of four or five denominations, there are about seventy kinds in all, each requiring an engraved model as its original. So wonderful is the multiplying power supplied by the electro-process, that the nine or ten million bank-notes now issued annually from Threadneedle Street are a mere trifle in relation to the productive capabilities of the original models or dies.

We come next to the paper. And here, as in the case of the engraved plates, the description given in our former article no longer applies. True, the material possesses all those qualities which render bank-note paper different from any other; but the processes of manufacture have been rendered subservient to a great change in the water-mark. This water-mark, one of the means for preventing or detecting forgery, was, until the last two or three years, produced by twisting wires to the desired forms, and stitching them to the wires of the sort of square sieve which constitutes the paper-making mould; the design was thus above the level face of the mould by the thickness of the wires composing it; and to that extent the paper of the bank-note was rendered thinner at the water-mark than at any other part, presenting a difference observable by transmitted light. Some one has had the patience to count no less than seventy-thousand twistings or intersections of wires, in the old wire-wrought watermark. A change has appeared; a patent process has been adopted by the Bank of England, in virtue of which the water-mark is engraved on steel-faced dies, to be thence transferred by stamping to brass plates, which, by further delicate processes are adjusted to the paper-making mould. By this means it is considered that greater identity is produced than under the old system; and moreover, there is a gradation of light and shade in the present water-mark very difficult to imitate. We are no longer permitted to say that "Machinery has made no inroads on this branch of paper-making." The same Hampshire mill still produces the paper, and the dipping of the mould into the pulp is still performed by hand; but almost every other part of the manufacture is now assisted by machinery, on the principle that machinery is better fitted than manual labour to produce, identity of form in the articles manufactured. The paper made for surface-printed notes undergoes a process of dry-glazing by rolling, not applied to the paper formerly used for plate printing; and this process is effected at the mill, before the paper is sent up to the Bank of England.

The change of system has led to a change in the ink as in most other of the appliances; for the two modes of applying the paper to the device, or the device to the paper, render different qualities of ink necessary. Instead of being made from the charred husks of Rhenish grapes after their juices had been expressed, and carefully combined with linseed oil; the bank-note ink is now, Mr. Smee tells us, prepared by collecting in large chambers the smoke from burning coal-tar naphtha, and combining this soot with a peculiar varnish, into an unctuous compound suitable for surface-printing ink.

As with the plates, the paper, and the ink, so with the printing; the change from one system to another involved a wholly new arrangement of apparatus. At first it could not be easily decided whether the presses should be hand-presses or others combining modern applications of machinery; and it was not until after numerous experiments and a large outlay, that the present plan was adopted—a plan in which many inventions by many ingenious men have been combined. The counting of the sheets or notes before they leave the paper-mill, and after and before every single process at the bank, is as sedulously attended to as before; it could scarcely be more so; for the biography of a bank-note, so to speak, is recorded from the very earliest stage of its existence to the very latest.

Some changes, too, have been effected in the numbering of the notes; but not to such an extent as to depart from the general principle before acted on; a principle of singular beauty and exactness. The dates and numbers are still the same mystic symbols as before, having a meaning which the public believe they understand, but which are really understood by none but the Bank authorities themselves. The never-ending, very comprehensive, clearly declaratory, I promise to pay, in connection with the name of Mr. Matthew Marshall, or whoever may happen to be Cashier of the Bank, is as decisive on the modern notes as on those of past days; but the promise is hedged round with quite as many safeguards, or more. If we have two genuine notes of the same number, they will have different dates; if two of the same date, they will have different numbers; so that every circulated note is unlike every other, in some one or more particulars.

It may be very safely assumed that the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, in these costly and long-continued experiments concerning bank-note manufacture, is influenced rather by a wish to baffle the forgers than to cheapen the cost of production. This latter may be a very proper and judicious object, but becomes trifling when compared with the former. The venerable lady has many little secrets known only within her official house, for testing the genuineness of notes. The public, not admitted to these secret councils, are left to guard themselves as best they may. When the Anastatic process, and the Selbst-drück process, and the electrotype process, and the photographic process, successively burst upon the eyes of a wondering world, the bank-note family felt a little nervous, and prophesied dire misfortune and dark roguery in the future; but our commercial circles do not appear to be troubled with any large increase, if any increase at all, in forged notes. Whatever 'graphy is adopted, there is probably some one characteristic or other which it will fail to imitate, and which will serve as a test of its spuriousness.

It would be a useful thing if clever men would give us a set of simple rules, pointing out what the 'graphies cannot do in way of imitation. Thus, in eighteen hundred and fifty-three, an alarm was spread that photography was about to be employed in imitating bank-notes; whereupon a writer in the Times pointed out that photography could not well imitate the water-mark, whatever it might do with the inked device. His wisdom assumed the following form: "The water-mark of a bank-note results from a difference in the substance of the paper, and is only visible by transmitted light,—that is, when the note is held up so that the light may pass through it,—it being in the body of the pulp. Now the imitated water-mark would be on the surface only, and would be produced by a slight darkening of the front of the note, corresponding exactly with the thicker portions of the paper of the note it was copied from; it would therefore be visible by reflected as well as by transmitted light, and would be only on the front, but not on the back. Consequently, by doubling a note so produced, in such a way as to see at the same time part of the back and part of the front, the fraud would be at once detected, as the counter-mark would not be on both."

It is only fair that, while the Old Lady is entrenching herself within a fortress of tests and detectives, the public should have some such elucidations as the above (supposing it to be correct) of the means whereby they could measure the genuineness of their bank-notes—those flimsy but mighty precursors of so much joy, sorrow, benevolence, roguery, commerce, speculation, invention, discovery. The parent, if she can, should furnish us with marks ot the legitimacy of her own children.

THE POOR CLARE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

WHAT was to be done next? was the question that I asked myself. As for Lucy, she would fain have submitted to the doom that lay upon her. Her gentleness and piety, under the pressure of so horrible a life, seemed over-passive to me. She never complained. Mrs. Clarke complained more than ever. As for me, I was more in love with the real Lucy than ever; but I shrunk from the false similitude with an intensity proportioned to my love. I found out by instinct, that Mrs. Clarke had occasional temptations to leave Lucy. The good lady's nerves were shaken, and, from what she said, I could almost have concluded that the object of the Double was to drive away from Lucy this last and almost earliest friend. At times, I could scarcely bear to own it, but I myself felt inclined to turn recreant; and I would accuse Lucy of being too patient—too resigned. One after another, she won the little children of Coldholme. (Mrs. Clarke and she had resolved to stay there,

for was it not as good a place as any other to such as they? and did not all our faint hopes rest on Bridget—never seen or heard of now, but still we trusted to come back, or give some token?) So, as I say, one after another, the little children came about my Lucy, won by her soft tones, and her gentle smiles, and kind actions. Alas! one after another they fell away, and shrunk from her path with blanching terror; and we too surely guessed the reason why. It was the last drop. I could bear it no longer. I resolved no more to linger around the spot, but to go back to my uncle, and among the learned divines of the city of London seek for some power whereby to annul the curse.

My uncle, meanwhile, had obtained all the requisite testimonials relating to Lucy's descent and birth, from the Irish lawyers, and from Mr. Gisborne. The latter gentleman had written from abroad (he was again serving in the Austrian army), a letter alternately passionately self-reproachful, and stoically repellent. It was evident that when he thought of Mary—her short life—how he had wronged her, and of her violent death, he could hardly find words severe enough for his own conduct, and from this point of view the curse that Bridget had laid upon him and his, was regarded by him as a prophetic doom, to the utterance of which she was moved by a Higher Power, working for the fulfilment of a deeper vengeance than for the death of the poor dog. But then, again, when he came to speak of his daughter, the repugnance which the conduct of the demoniac creature had produced in his mind, was but ill-disguised under a show of profound indifference as to Lucy's fate. One almost felt as if he would have been as content to put her out of existence, as he would have been to destroy some disgusting reptile that had invaded his chamber or his couch.

The great Fitzgerald property was Lucy's; and that was all—was nothing.

My uncle and I sate in the gloom of a London November evening, in our house in Ormond Street. I was out of health, and felt as if I were in an inextricable coil of misery. Lucy and I wrote to each other, but that was little; and we dared not see each other for dread of the fearful Third, who had more than once taken her place at our meetings. My uncle had, on the day I speak of, bidden prayers to be put up on the ensuing Sabbath in many a church and meeting-house in London, for one grievously tormented by an evil spirit. He had faith in prayers—I had none; I was fast losing faith in all things. So we sat—he trying to interest me in the old talk of other days, I oppressed by one thought—when our old servant, Anthony, opened the door, and, without speaking, showed in a very gentlemanly and prepossessing man, who had something remarkable about his dress, betraying his profession to be that of the Roman Catholic priesthood. He glanced at my uncle first, then at me. It was to me he bowed.

"I did not give my name," said he, "because you would hardly have recognised it; unless, sir, when in the north, you heard of Father Bernard, the chaplain at Stoney Hurst?"

I remembered afterwards that I had heard of him, but at the time I had utterly forgotten it; so I professed myself a complete stranger to him; while my ever hospitable uncle, although hating a Papist as much as it was in his nature to hate anything, placed a chair for the visitor, and bade Anthony bring glasses and a fresh jug of claret.

Father Bernard received this courtesy with the graceful ease and pleasant acknowledgment which belongs to the man of the world. Then he turned to scan me with his keen glance. After some slight conversation, entered into on his part, I am certain, with an intention of discovering on what terms of confidence I stood with my uncle, he paused, and said gravely:

"I am sent here with a message to you, sir, from a woman to whom you have shown kindness, and who is one of my penitents, in Antwerp—one Bridget Fitzgerald."

"Bridget Fitzgerald!" exclaimed I. "In Antwerp? Tell me, sir, all that you can about her."

"There is much to be said," he replied. "But may I inquire if this gentleman—if your uncle is acquainted with the particulars of which you and I stand informed?"

"All that I know, he knows," said I, eagerly, laying my hand on my uncle's arm, as he made a motion as if to quit the room.

"Then I have to speak before two gentlemen who, however they may differ from me in faith, are yet fully impressed with the fact, that there are evil powers going about continually to take cognisance of our evil thoughts; and, if their Master gives them power, to bring them into overt action. Such is my theory of the nature of that sin, of which I dare not disbelieve—as some sceptics would have us do—the sin of witchcraft. Of this deadly sin, you and I are aware Bridget Fitzgerald has been guilty. Since you saw her last, many prayers have been offered in our churches, many masses sung, many penances undergone, in order that, if God and the Holy Saints so willed it, her sin might be blotted out. But it has not been so willed."

"Explain to me," said I, "who you are, and how you come connected with Bridget. Why is she at Antwerp? I pray you, sir, tell me more. If I am impatient, excuse me; I am ill and feverish, and in consequence bewildered."

There was something to me inexpressibly soothing in the tone of voice with which he began to narrate, as it were from the beginning, his acquaintance with Bridget.

"I had known Mr. and Mrs. Starkey during

their residence abroad, and so it fell out naturally that when I came as chaplain to the Sherburnes at Stoney Hurst, our acquaintance was renewed; and thus I became the confessor of the whole family, isolated as they were from the offices of the Church, Sherburne being their nearest neighbour who professed the true faith. Of course you are aware that facts revealed in confession are sealed as in the grave; but I learnt enough of Bridget's character to be convinced that I had to do with no common woman; one powerful for good as for evil. I believe that I was able to give her spiritual assistance from time to time, and that she looked upon me as a servant of that Holy Church, which has such wonderful power of moving men's hearts, and relieving them of the burden of their sins. I have known her cross the moors on the wildest nights of storm, to confess and be absolved; and then she would return, calmed and subdued, to her daily work about her mistress, no one wotting where she had been during the hours that most passed in sleep upon their beds. After her daughter's departure—after Mary's mysterious disappearance—I had to impose many a long penance to wash away the sin of impatient repining that was fast leading her into the deeper guilt of blasphemy. She set out on that long journey of which you have possibly heard—that fruitless journey in search of Mary—and during her absence, my superiors ordered my return to my former duties at Antwerp, and for many years I heard no more of Bridget.

"Not many months ago, as I was passing homewards in the evening, along one of the streets near St. Jacques, leading into the Meer Straet, I saw a woman sitting crouched up under the shrine of the Holy Mother of Sorrows. Her hood was drawn over her head, so that the shadow caused by the light of the lamp above fell deep over her face; her hands were clasped round her knees. It was evident that she was some one in hopeless trouble, and as such it was my duty to stop and speak. I naturally addressed her first in Flemish, believing her to be one of the lower class of inhabitants. She shook her head, but did not look up. Then I tried French, and she replied in that language, but speaking it so indifferently, that I was sure she was either English or Irish, and consequently spoke to her in my own native tongue. She recognised my voice; and, starting up, caught at my robes, dragging me before the blessed shrine, and throwing herself down, and forcing me, as much by her evident desire as by her action, to kneel beside her, she exclaimed:

"'O Holy Virgin! you will never hearken to me again, but hear him; for you know him of old, that he does your bidding, and strives to heal broken hearts. Hear him!'

"She turned to me.

"'She will hear you, if you will only pray. She never hears me: she and all the saints in Heaven cannot hear my prayers, for the Evil One carries them off, as he carried that first away. O, Father Bernard, pray for me!'

"I prayed for one in sore distress, of what nature I could not say; but the Holy Virgin would know. Bridget held me fast, gasping with eagerness at the sound of my words. When I had ended, I rose, and, making the sign of the Cross over her, I was going to bless her in the name of the Holy Church, when she shrunk away like some terrified creature, and said:

"'I am guilty of deadly sin, and am not shriven.'

"'Arise, my daughter,' said I, 'and come with me.' And I led the way into one of the confessionals of St. Jacques.

"She knelt; I listened. No words came. The evil powers had stricken her dumb, as I heard afterwards they had many a time before, when she approached confession.

"She was too poor to pay for the necessary forms of exorcism; and hitherto those priests to whom she had addressed herself were either so ignorant of the meaning of her broken French, or her Irish-English, or else esteemed her to be one crazed—as, indeed, her wild and excited manner might easily have led any one to think—that they had neglected the sole means of loosening her tongue, so that she might confess her deadly sin, and, after due penance, obtain absolution. But I knew Bridget of old, and felt that she was a penitent sent to me. I went through those holy offices appointed by our Church for the relief of such a case. I was the more bound to do this, as I found that she had come to Antwerp for the sole purpose of discovering me, and making confession to me. Of the nature of that fearful confession I am forbidden to speak. Much of it you know; possibly all.

"It now remains for her to free herself from mortal guilt, and to set others free from the consequences thereof. No prayers, no masses, will ever do it, although they may strengthen her with that strength by which alone acts of deepest love and purest self-devotion may be performed. Her words of passion, and cries for revenge—her unholy prayers could never reach the ears of the Holy Saints! Other powers intercepted them, and wrought so that the curses thrown up to Heaven have fallen on her own flesh and blood; and so, through her very strength of love, have bruised and crushed her heart. Henceforward her former self must be buried,—yea, buried quick, if need be,—but never more to make sign or utter cry on earth! She has become a Poor Clare, in order, if by perpetual penance and constant service of others, she may at length so act as to obtain final absolution and rest for her soul. Until then, the innocent must suffer. It is to plead for the innocent that I come to you; not in the name of the witch, Bridget Fitzgerald,

but of the penitent and servant of all men, the Poor Clare, Sister Magdalen."

"Sir," said I, "I listen to your request with respect; only I may tell you it is not needed to urge me to do all that I can on behalf of one, love for whom is part of my very life. If for a time I have absented myself from her, it is to think and work for her redemption. I, a member of the English Church—my uncle, a Puritan—pray morning and night for her by name: the congregations of London, on the next Sabbath, will pray for one unknown, that she may be set free from the Powers of Darkness. Moreover, I must tell you, sir, that those evil ones touch not the great calm of her soul. She lives her own pure and loving life, unharmed and untainted, though all men fall off from her. I would I could have her faith!"

My uncle now spoke.

"Nephew," said he, "it seems to me that this gentleman, although professing what I consider an erroneous creed, has touched upon the right point in exhorting Bridget to acts of love and mercy, whereby to wipe out her sin of hate and vengeance. Let us strive after our fashion, by almsgiving and visiting of the needy and fatherless, to make our prayers acceptable. Meanwhile, I myself will go down into the north, and take charge of the maiden. I am too old to be daunted by man or demon. I will bring her to this house as to a home; and let the Double come, if it will! A company of godly divines shall give it the meeting, and we will try issue."

The kindly, brave old man! But Father Bernard sate on musing.

"All hate," said he, "cannot be quenched in her heart; all Christian forgiveness cannot have entered into her soul, or the demon would have lost its power. You said, I think, that her grandchild was still tormented?"

"Still tormented!" I replied, sadly, thinking of Mistress Clarke's last letter.

He rose to go. We afterwards heard that the occasion of his coming to London was a secret political mission on behalf of the Jacobites. Nevertheless, he was a good and a wise man.

Months and months passed away without any change. Lucy entreated my uncle to leave her where she was,—dreading, as I learnt, lest if she came, with her fearful companion, to dwell in the same house with me, that my love could not stand the repeated shocks to which I should be doomed. And this she thought from no distrust of the strength of my affection, but from a kind of pitying sympathy for the terror to the nerves which she observed that the demoniac visitation caused in all.

I was restless and miserable. I devoted myself to good works; but I performed them from no spirit of love, but solely from the hope of reward and payment, and so the reward was never granted. At length, I asked my uncle's leave to travel; and I went forth, a wanderer, with no distincter end than that of many another wanderer—to get away from myself. A strange impulse led me to Antwerp, in spite of the wars and commotions then raging in the Low Countries—or rather, perhaps, the very craving to become interested in something external, led me into the thick of the struggle then going on with the Austrians. The cities of Flanders were all full at that time of civil disturbances and rebellions, only kept down by force, and the presence of an Austrian garrison in every place.

I arrived in Antwerp, and made inquiry for Father Bernard. He was away in the country for a day or two. Then I asked my way to the Convent of Poor Clares; but, being healthy and prosperous, I could only see the dim, pent-up, grey walls, shut closely in by narrow streets, in the lowest part of the town. My landlord told me, that had I been stricken by some loathsome disease, or in desperate case of any kind, the Poor Clares would have taken me, and tended me. He spoke of them as an order of mercy of the strictest kind, dressing scantily in the coarsest materials, going bare-foot, living on what the inhabitants of Antwerp chose to bestow, and sharing even those fragments and crumbs with the poor and helpless that swarmed all around; receiving no letters or communication with the outer world; utterly dead to everything but the alleviation of suffering. He smiled at my inquiring whether I could get speech of one of them; and told me that they were even forbidden to speak for the purposes of begging their daily food; while yet they lived, and fed others upon what was given in charity.

"But," exclaimed I, "supposing all men forgot them! Would they quietly lie down and die, without making sign of their extremity?"

"If such were their rule, the Poor Clares would willingly do it; but their founder appointed a remedy for such extreme case as you suggest. They have a bell—'tis but a small one, as I have heard, and has never yet been rung in the memory of man; when the Poor Clares have been without food for twenty-four hours, they may ring this bell, and then trust to our good people of Antwerp for rushing to the rescue of the Poor Clares, who have taken such blessed care of us in all our straits."

It seemed to me that such rescue would be rather late in the day; but I did not say what I thought. I rather turned the conversation, by asking my landlord if he knew, or had ever heard, anything of a certain Sister Magdalen."

"Yes," said he, rather under his breath; "news will creep out, even from a convent of Poor Clares. Sister Magdalen is either a great sinner or a great saint. She does more,

as I have heard, than all the other nuns put together; yet, when last month they would fain have made her mother superior, she begged rather that they would place her below all the rest, and make her the meanest servant of all."

"You never saw her?" asked I.

"Never," he replied.

I was weary of waiting for Father Bernard, and yet I lingered in Antwerp. The political state of things became worse than ever, increased to its height by the scarcity of food consequent on many deficient harvests. I saw groups of fierce, squalid men, at every corner of the street, glaring out with wolfish eyes at my sleek skin and handsome clothes.

At last Father Bernard returned. We had a long conversation, in which he told me that, curiously enough, Mr. Gisborne, Lucy's father, was serving in one of the Austrian regiments, then in garrison at Antwerp. I asked Father Bernard if he would make us acquainted; which he consented to do. But, a day or two afterwards, he told me that, on hearing my name, Mr. Gisborne had declined responding to any advances on my part, saying he had abjured his country, and hated his countrymen.

Probably he recollected my name in connection with that of his daughter Lucy. Anyhow, it was clear enough that I had no chance of making his acquaintance. Father Bernard confirmed me in my suspicions of the hidden fermentation for some coming evil working among the "blouses" of Antwerp, and he would fain have had me depart from out of the city; but I rather craved the excitement of danger, and stubbornly refused to leave.

One day, when I was walking with him in the Place Verte, he bowed to an Austrian officer, who was crossing towards the cathedral.

"That is Mr. Gisborne," said he, as soon as the gentleman was past.

I turned to look at the tall, slight figure of the officer. He carried himself in a stately manner, although he was past middle age, and from his years, might have had some excuse for a slight stoop. As I looked at the man, he turned round, his eyes met mine, and I saw his face. Deeply lined, sallow, and scathed was that countenance; scarred by passion as well as by the fortunes of war. 'Twas but for a moment our eyes met. We each turned round, and went on our separate way.

But his whole appearance was not one to be easily forgotten; the thorough appointment of the dress, and evident thought bestowed on it, made but an incongruous whole with the dark, gloomy expression of his countenance. Because he was Lucy's father, I sought instinctively to meet him everywhere. At last he must have become aware of my pertinacity, for he gave me a haughty scowl whenever I passed him. In one of these encounters, however, I chanced to be of some service to him. He was turning the corner of a street, and came suddenly on one of the groups of discontented Flemings of whom I have spoken. Some words were exchanged, when my gentleman out with his sword, and with a slight but skilful cut he drew blood from one of those who had insulted him, as he fancied, though I was too far off to hear the words. They would all have fallen upon him had I not rushed forwards and raised the cry, then well known in Antwerp, of rally, to the Austrian soldiers who were perpetually patrolling the streets, and who came in numbers to the rescue. I think that neither Mr. Gisborne nor the mutinous group of plebeians owed me much gratitude for my interference. He had planted himself against a wall, in a skilful attitude of fence, ready with his bright glancing rapier to do battle with all the heavy, fierce, unarmed men, some six or seven in number. But when his own soldiers came up, he sheathed his sword; and, giving some careless word of command, sent them away again, and continued his saunter all alone down the street, the workmen snarling in his rear, and more than half-inclined to fall on me for my cry for rescue. I cared not if they did, my life seemed so dreary a burden just then; and perhaps it was this daring loitering among them that prevented their attacking me. Instead, they suffered me to fall into conversation with them; and I heard some of their grievances. Sore and heavy to be borne were they, and no wonder the sufferers were savage and desperate.

The man whom Gisborne had wounded across his face would fain have got out of me the name of his aggressor, but I refused to tell it. Another of the group heard his inquiry, and made answer:

"I know the man. He is one Gisborne, aide-de-camp to the General-Commandant. I know him well."

He began to tell some story in connection with Gisborne in a low and muttering voice; and while he was relating a tale, which I saw excited their evil blood, and which they evidently wished me not to hear, I sauntered away and back to my lodgings.

That night Antwerp was in open revolt. The inhabitants rose in rebellion against their Austrian masters. The Austrians, holding the gates of the city, remained at first pretty quiet in the citadel; only from time to time the boom of a great cannon swept sullenly over the town. But, if they expected the disturbance to die away, and spend itself in a few hours' fury, they were mistaken. In a day or two the rioters held possession of the principal municipal buildings. Then the Austrians poured forth in bright flaming array, calm and smiling, as they marched to the posts assigned, as if the fierce mob were no more to them than the

swarms of buzzing summer flies. Their practised manœuvres, their well-aimed shot told with terrible effect; but in the place of one slain rioter, three sprang up of his blood to avenge his loss. But a deadly foe, a ghastly ally of the Austrians, was at work. Food, scarce and dear for months, was now hardly to be obtained at any price. Desperate efforts were being made to bring provisions into the city, for the rioters had friends without. Close to the city port nearest to the Scheldt a great struggle took place. I was there, helping the rioters, whose cause I had adopted. We had a savage encounter with the Austrians. Numbers fell on both sides; I saw them lie bleeding for a moment; then a volley of smoke obscured them; and when it cleared away they were dead—trampled upon or smothered, pressed down and hidden by the freshly-wounded whom those last guns had brought low. And then a grey-robed and grey-veiled figure came right across the flashing guns, and stooped over some one, whose life-blood was ebbing away; sometimes it was to give him drink from cans which they carried slung at their sides, sometimes I saw the cross held above a dying man, and rapid prayers were being uttered, unheard by men in that hellish din and clangour, but listened to by One above. I saw all this as in a dream; the reality of that stern time was battle and carnage. But I knew that these grey figures, their bare feet all wet with blood, and their faces hidden by their veils, were the Poor Clares—sent forth now because dire agony was abroad and imminent danger at hand. Therefore, they left their cloistered shelter, and came into that thick and evil mêlée.

Close to me — driven past me by the struggle of many fighters—came the Antwerp burgess with the scarce-healed scar upon his face; and in an instant more he was thrown by the press upon the Austrian officer Gisborne, and ere either had recovered the shock the burgess had recognised his opponent.

"Ha! the Englishman Gisborne!" he cried, and threw himself upon him with redoubled fury. He had struck him hard—the Englishman was down; when out of the smoke came a dark-grey figure, and threw herself right under the uplifted flashing sword. The burgess's arm stood arrested. Neither Austrians nor Anversois willingly harmed the Poor Clares.

"Leave him to me!" said a low stern voice. "He is mine enemy—mine for many years."

Those words were the last I heard. I myself was struck down by a bullet. I remember nothing more for days. When I came to myself, I was at the extremity of weakness, and was craving for food to recruit my strength. My landlord sate watching me. He, too, looked pinched and shrunken; he had heard of my wounded state, and sought me out. Yes! the struggle still continued, but the famine was sore; and some, he had heard, had died for lack of food. The tears stood in his eyes as he spoke. But soon he shook off his weakness, and his natural cheerfulness returned. Father Bernard had been to see me—no one else. (Who should, indeed?) Father Bernard would come back that afternoon—he had promised. But Father Bernard never came, although I was up and dressed and looking eagerly for him.

My landlord brought me a meal which he had cooked himself: of what it was composed he would not say, but it was most excellent, and with every mouthful I seemed to gain strength. The good man sat looking at my evident enjoyment with a happy smile of sympathy; but, as my appetite became satisfied, I began to detect a certain wistfulness in his eyes, as if craving for the food I had so nearly devoured—for indeed at that time I was hardly aware of the extent of the famine. Suddenly, there was a sound of many rushing feet past our window. My landlord opened one of the sides of it, the better to learn what was going on. Then we heard a faint, cracked, tinkling bell, coming shrill upon the air, clear and distinct from all other sounds. "Holy Mother!" exclaimed my landlord, "the Poor Clares!"

He snatched up the fragments of my meal, and crammed them into my hands, bidding me follow Down-stairs he ran, clutching at more food, as the women of his house eagerly held it out to him; and in a moment we were in the street, moving along with the great current, all tending towards the Convent of the Poor Clares. And still, as if piercing our ears with its inarticulate cry, came the shrill tinkle of the bell. In that strange crowd were old men trembling and sobbing as they carried their little pittance of food; women with the tears running down their cheeks, who had snatched up what provisions they had in the vessels in which they stood, so that the burden of these was in many cases much greater than that which they contained; children with flushed faces, grasping tight the morsel of bitten cake or bread, in their eagerness to carry it safe to the help of the Poor Clares; strong men—yea, both Anversois and Austrians—pressing onwards with set teeth, and no word spoken; and over all, and through all, came that sharp tinkle—that cry for help in extremity.

We met the first torrent of people returning with blanched and piteous faces: they were issuing out of the convent to make way for the offerings of others. "Haste, haste!" said they. "A Poor Clare is dying! A Poor Clare is dead for hunger! God forgive us, and our city!"

We pressed on. The stream bore us along where it would. We were carried through refectories, bare and crumbless; into cells over whose doors the conventual name of the occupant was written. Thus it was that I,

with others, was forced into Sister Magdalen's cell. On her couch lay Gisborne, pale unto death, but not dead. By his side was a cup of water, and a small morsel of mouldy bread, which he had pushed out of his reach, and could not move to obtain. Over against his bed were these words, copied in the English version: "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

Some of us gave him of our food, and left him eating greedily, like some famished wild animal. For now it was no longer the sharp tinkle, but that one solemn toll, which in all Christian countries tells of the passing of the spirit out of earthly life into eternity; and again a murmur gathered and grew, as of many people speaking with awed breath, "A Poor Clare is dying! a Poor Clare is dead!"

Borne along once more by the motion of the crowd, we were carried into the chapel belonging to the Poor Clares. On a bier before the high altar lay a woman—lay sister Magdalen—lay Bridget Fitzgerald. By her side stood Father Bernard, in his robes of office, and holding the crucifix on high while he pronounced the solemn absolution of the Church, as to one who had newly confessed herself of deadly sin. I pushed on with passionate force, till I stood close to the dying woman, as she received extreme unction amid the breathless and awed hush of the multitude around. Her eyes were glazing, her limbs were stiffening; but when the rite was over and finished, she raised her gaunt figure slowly up, and her eyes brightened to a strange intensity of joy, as, with the gesture of her finger and the trance-like gleam of her eye, she seemed like one who watched the disappearance of some loathed and fearful creature.

"She is freed from the curse," said she, as she fell back dead.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Little children, with long waving ringlets,
Gentle maids, with sunny eyes and hair;
Pleasant 'twas to see them clustered thickly,
Lovingly, around a lady's chair.

Lovely was the lady's face, though sorrow
Had paled the cheek, and dimm'd the large dark eye;
Speaking of troubles patiently endured,
Chasten'd Hope, and holy Constancy.

Thus she spake, in accents low and silvery,
"Ye would know why I your pastimes leave,
And in solitude and silence ever
Spend the joyous hours of Christmas Eve?

Listen to my story, and not vainly,
Hearing it, may some short time be past,
If it teach you how, through bitter sorrow,
God in mercy sends us peace at last.

Many years ago, one bleak November,
Tidings reach'd me of my husband's death;
Like a hero, fighting, he had fallen,
Shouting 'Victory' with his dying breath.

Then I mourn'd for him as one distracted—
Sinfully, despairingly, I mourn'd—
Till my love fix'd on another object,
From the Maker to His creature turn'd.

I had one child—a lovelier little cherub
Never frolick'd in this happy world;
In his dark eyes shone his father's spirit,
Round his head soft golden ringlets curl'd.

All I had left to love—with blind devotion
I almost worshipp'd him—my child, my pride!
The Lord look'd down: in mercy and compassion
Chasten'd me again; my baby died!

'Twas on Christmas Eve: my boy was lying
Worn with suffering, moaning, on my breast;
Even I call'd, in bitterness and anguish,
Death to come, if Death would give him rest.

Still the baby linger'd, tossing wildly:
Then I thought how ancient legends say
Door or window must be open'd widely,
That Death may, entering, bear the soul away.

Rose I then, with cold and trembling fingers
Oped the door: in robes of shining white—
Soft radiance dropping from his starry chaplet—
Stood God's messenger before my sight.

In the darken'd room the angel glided
(Moan'd no more the child upon my breast),
Soft he spake: 'The Lord hath heard thy weeping,
Death is come to give thy baby rest!'

With divine compassion on his features,
Still he spake: 'Forlorn one, do not weep
As without hope; our Gracious Master speaketh,
Lo! I give to my beloved—sleep!

Death is sleep; but, O! the glorious waking
In the land where sorrow is no more!
Patiently endure then, as expecting
Soon to join the loved ones gone before.

Hark! the angels singing: Childless mother,
They proclaim the Advent upon Earth
Of the child Christ Jesus, on whose birthday
Hail with joy thy baby's heavenly birth!'

Then the light around the angel faded,
I was left for evermore alone;
Till I Heavenward turned for consolation,
Where my husband and my child were gone.

Thus my proud soul learnt humility,
Learnt to kiss with gratitude the rod;
Humbly striving to be good and patient,
Meekly waiting for the voice of God!

Thus I celebrate, alone and silent,
On the Christmas Eve, a double birth;
Thanking God, who took my child to Heaven;
Praising God, who sent His child on Earth.

For whose birth my soul is very joyful,
Through whose blood I hope to be forgiven,
By whose death I boldly pass the gateway
Leading to His Father's homes in Heaven!"

A JOURNEY DUE NORTH.

RUSSIANS AT HOME.

An old Russian peasant-man who almost dotes, and a drunken varlet floundering on a bed, are all that we have seen yet human in Volnoï. Sophron and the Starosta shall now give place to the wives, the children, and the young maidens of the Sloboda; yet, when I come to tackle them, my ambition

to possess pictorial talent sensibly diminishes—so little rosiness, so little beauty, so few smiles have claims upon my palette among the youngest women and girls.

It is to be understood that I have long since given up, and no more insist on, that long and fondly preserved Annual tradition of the beauty of peasant girls, the merry ways of peasant children, the prettiness of villages, the picturesqueness of peasant costume. I have buried the fallacious tradition along with other illusions. I give up pifferari, the Saltarella, purple vines, the rayed petticoats and miniature table-cloth head-dresses of Italian Contadine, the harvesters of Leopold Robert, the brigands of Pinelli, the high-laced caps and shining sabots of little Normande paysannes, the pretty Welch girl with a man's hat, the skirt of her gown drawn through the pocket-holes, and a goat following at her heels; the lustrous eyes and henna-tipped fingers of Turkish women, the pretty bare feet and long dark hair of the maids of Connaught, the buy-a-broom quaintness of the yellow-haired Alsaciennes, the ribboned boddices, straw hats, and chintz shirts of our own comely peasant girls in merry England. I know how melancholy are the habitations and ways of poverty. I know that Blankanese flower-girls, Contadine, Normande paysannes, Turkish houris, Connaught maidens, barefooted and beauteous, are conventional artificialities, made to order, exhibited, ticketed, and appraised, for the benefit of artists' studios, aristocratic families who like Norman wet-nurses, writers of oriental poems, the frequenters of the Alster Bassin promenade at Hamburg, and the artists who illustrate the wild Irish novels.

So, prepared for the prosaic, I am not disappointed at as great a paucity of the beautiful as of the picturesque among Russian peasant women. But, as in the homeliest plainest villages in the west I have seen and delighted in some rough gaiety, and an unpretending neatness and a ruddy comeliness that to me compensated for any absent amount of Annualism in feature, form, or attire, I cannot avoid feeling as though I had swallowed the contents of a belt of Number Four shot—so heavy am I—when I consider the women and children here. The negro slave will laugh, and jest, and show all his white teeth, before half the wounds from his last cutting up are healed; but the Russian peasant, male or female, is—when sober—always mournful, dejected, doleful. All the songs he sings are monotonous complaints, drawling, pining, and despairing. You have heard how the Swiss soldiers used to weep and die sometimes for home sickness at the notes of the Ranz des Vaches. The Muscovite moujik has a perpetual home sickness upon him; but it is a sickness, not for, but of his home. He is sick of his life and of himself. When drunk, only, the Russian peasant lights up into a feeble corpse-candle sort of gaiety; but it is temporary and transient, and he sobers himself in sackcloth and ashes.

Home is not as a home held by in any class in Russia. It very rarely happens that moujiks who from serfs have become merchants of the second guild, and amassed large fortunes, ever think in their declining days of retiring to the village which has given them birth, or even of making bequests beneficial to their native place at their death. Soldiers too, when discharged after their time of service has expired, scarcely ever return to their village. They prefer becoming servants and Dvorniks in the large towns. "Eh! and what would you have them do?" a vivacious Russian gentleman, with whom I had been conversing on the subject, asked me. They are no longer serfs, and are of no use to their seigneur. They are no longer young, and are no longer wanted for the conscription. What would you have them do in this village of yours? What indeed? Governmentally inclined philosophers say that the Russians are so patriotic that home is home to them, "be it ever so homely," throughout the whole extent of the empire, and that they are as much at home in the steppes of the Ukraine as in the morasses of Lake Lodoga. I am of opinion myself that the homely feeling does not exist at all among the Russian people. Russian military officers have told me that an epidemic melancholia sometimes breaks out among young recruits which is broadly qualified as a Mal du Pays; but I think it might be far better described as a Mal de Position. The position of a recruit for the first six months of his apprenticeship is perhaps the most intolerable and infernal noviciate which a human being can well suffer—a combination of the situation of the young bear with all his troubles to come, the monkey upon that well-known allowance of many kicks and few halfpence, the hedgehog with his prickles inwards instead of outwards, and the anti-slavery preacher whose suit of tar and feathers is just beginning to peel off. When, however, the recruit has swallowed sufficient stick, he very soon gets over his Mal du Pays. Rationally envisaging the question of home-loving in nationalities, the Great Britons (English, Irish, and Scotch), though the greatest travellers and longest residents abroad, are the people most remarkable for a steadfast love for their home, and a steadfast determination to return to it at some time or another. After them must be ranked the French, who always preserve an affectionate reverence for their pays; but for all the sentimental Vaterland and Suce Heimweg songs of the Germans, the hundreds of German tailors, bootmakers, and watchmakers, one finds in every European capital, seem to get on very well—at least up to threescore and ten, or thereabouts—without looking forward to a return home. Your Dane or Swede, so long as he

remains in his own land, is very fond of it: but, once persuaded to quit it, he thoroughly naturalises himself in the country which he has adopted, and forgets all about Denmark and Sweden. As to the Americans, they never have any homes. They locate; and as gladly locate at Spitzbergen as at Hartford, Connecticut. The Poles, perhaps, are really attached to home; but the Czar is in possession; and we know that the most home-loving Briton would be loth to go back to his little house in Camberwell if he was aware of an abhorrent broker's man sitting in the front parlour.

There is a Baba, a peasant girl, who is sitting listlessly on a rough-hewn bench at the door of one of the homogeneous hovels. She is not quite unoccupied, for she has the head of a gawky girl of ten on her knee, and is—well, I need not describe the universal pastime with which uncleanly nations fill up their leisure time.

The Baba is of middle size: a strong, well-hung, likely wench enough. Her face and arms are burnt to a most disagreeable tawny, tan brown; the colour of the pigskin of a second-hand saddle that has been hanging for months—exposed to every weather—outside a broker's shop in Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane, London, is, perhaps, the closest image I can give of her face's hue. Nay; there is a wood, or rather preparation of wood, used by upholsterers—not rosewood, ebony, mahogany, walnut, oak, but a fictitiously browned, ligneous substance, called Pembroke. I have seen it, at sales, go in the guise of a round table for one pound nine. I mind it in catalogues: pembroke chest of drawers—pembroke work-table. I know its unwholesome colour, and dully, blinking, sheen, which no bees-wax, no household-stuff, no wash-leather can raise to a generous polish. Pembroke is the Russian peasant complexion. The forehead low and receding. The roots of the hair of a dirty straw-colour, (growing in alarmingly close proximity to the eyebrows, as if they were originally the "same concern," and the low forehead a bone of contention which had grown up between them and dissolved the partnership). Set very close together, in this brown face, are two eyes—respectable as to size—and light-blue in colour, which, as the orbs themselves are quite lustreless and void of speculation, has a very weird—not to say horrifying—effect. The nose broad, thick, unshapely, as if the os-nasi had been suddenly covered up with a lump of clay, but that no refinements of moulding, no hesitating compromises between the Roman, the pug, and the snub had been gone through. It is as though Nature had done some million of these noses by contract, and they had been clapped indiscriminately on as many million moujik faces. Not to grow Slawkenbergian on the subjects of noses, I may conclude, nasally, by remarking that the nostrils are wide apart—quite circular—and seemingly punched, rather than perforated, with a violent contempt of reference to the requirements of symmetry of position. The mouth is not bad, —lips red enough—teeth remarkably sound and white—and the entire features would be pleasant, but that the mouth-corners are drawn down, and that the under lip is pendulous—not sensuously, but senselessly. The chin has a curious triangular dimple in the centre; for all the organs of hearing visible, the Baba might be as earless—she is certainly as unabashed—as Defoe; the neck is the unmitigated bull pattern: short, clumsy, thick-set, and not, I am afraid, very graceful in a young female; the shoulders broad and rounded (that back is well-accustomed to carrying burdens, and prodigious burdens the Russian women do carry sometimes); the feet are large, long, and flat, the hands not very large, but terribly corrugated as to their visible venous economy. How could it be otherwise when every species of manual labour (they build log-houses, though I have not seen them lay bricks) except horse-driving, is shared with the ruder sex by women. The Babas of a Russian village have their specially feminine employments, it is true. They may spin flax; they may weave; they may cook; they may wash linen; but it is at the sole will and pleasure of the seigneur or the bourmister if they are in Corvée to him, to set them tasks of sawing wood, or plastering walls, or dragging trucks, or whatever else may suit his seignorial or bourmistral caprice. If the Baba, or her husband, or father, or whoever else owns her labour—for an independent spinster, an unprotected Russian female is, save in the upper classes, not to be found—is at Obrok, instead of Corvée, the employments he may give to his Baba may be even more miscellaneous. I have seen women in Russia occupied in the most incongruous manner; standing on ladders, whitewashing, sweeping streets, hammering at pots and kettles, like tinkers; driving pigs; and, in the Gostinnoï-Dvors, selling second-hand goods by auction?

I have alluded to the Baba's feet. The Russian nobility are as sensitive as the late Lord Byron as to the aristocratic presages to be drawn from a small hand and foot. I have frequently heard in Russian society that genteel dictum common in England, that no person can be well-born unless water will flow beneath the arch of his instep without wetting it. I believe that in the short reign of his late Majesty Richard, third of that name, similar notions began to be entertained in polite society with reference to humps.

The Baba's dress is not pretty. To do her justice, though, there cannot be the slightest doubt as to her possession of—well, not a shirt—that is a masculine garment, but a—— but it is unpardonable to mention in English what every English lady will name in the

French language without a shadow of hesitation—well: a white cotton or very coarse linen under-garment. And this ordinarily innermost garment is very liberally displayed; for, the gown sleeves are very scanty—mere shoulder-straps, in fact; and the real sleeves are those of the undergarment, to name which, is to run in peril of deportation to that Cayenne of conversaziones—Coventry. There is an equally generous display of body linen, more or less dazzlingly white in front,—the garment forming an ample gorget from the neck to the waist, the bust of the gown being cut square, of the antique form, with which you are familiar in the portraits of Anne Boleyn,—but very much lower. In aristocratic Russian society the ladies have their necks and shoulders as décolletées as the best modern milliner among us could desire; and in aristocratic Russian theatres the ballerine are as scantily draped as at home here; but, among the gens du peuple, remnants of oriental jealousy and seclusion of women are very perceptible, and the forms are studiously concealed. But for an eccentricity of attire, I am about to point out, high boots, long skirts, and high necks are productive of a most exemplary shapelessness and repudiation of any Venus-like toilettes, as arranged by those eminent modistes, the Mademoiselles Graces.

This trifling eccentricity consists in the Russian peasant women having a most bewildering custom of wearing a very tight waist at mid-neck, and a very full bust at the waist. Their corsage presents the aspect of the section of a very ripe, full pear, resting on its base. Beneath the clavicles all is as flat as a pancake; where we expect to profit by the triumphs of tight-lacing as productive of a genteel and wasp-like waist, we find this astonishing protuberance. The waist is upside down. How they manage to accomplish this astonishing feat; whether they lacteally nourish dumb-bells or babies made of pig-lead; whether it be physical malformation, or some cunning sub-camicial strapping and bandaging; whether it be the effect of one or all of these, I am not aware; but there is that effect in the Baba—baffling, puzzling, and to me as irritating as though the girl wore a shoe on her head, or broad-brimmed hats on her feet. (There is, by the way, really a shoe-shaped coiffure prevalent among the peasant girls of Tarjok and Twer. They do not wear the kakoschnik, but in lieu of that picturesque head-dress they assume a tall conical structure of pasteboard, covered, according to their means, with coloured stuff, silk or velvet, and ornamented with ribbons, spangles, bits of coloured glass, and small coins. The apex of the sugar-loaf cap leans forward curvilineally, and then is again turned up at the extreme peak, somewhat in the manner of a Turkish slipper or papousch. This when, as is frequently the case, it has a streaming veil behind, bears a quaint resemblance to the old peaked head-dresses we see in Strutt.) Why am I now irritated because this Russian slave-woman chooses to go into a feeble-minded course of ridiculous deformity? She is not one whit more absurd, or more deformed, than the high-born ladies in the West, with the hair so scragged off their sheep's-heads, with the watch-glass waists, with the men's coats and tails and big buttons, with the concave pan-cakes for hats; with the eleven balloon-skirts one above another, one, I presume, of wood, one of block-tin, one of steel, one of whalebone, one (I know) of the horse, another (may be) of the cat; a seventh, perchance, of the nether millstone. Now I think of it, I am more, much more, irritated at the Guys, who go about civilised streets,—the Guys who ought to be beautiful women. I cry out loudly against the fashions at noon-day. I clench my fist on the public pavement. I daresay the police have noticed me. I feel inclined to pull off my shoes, like George Fox, the roaring Quaker, and walk through the streets of Lichfield, or London, or Paris, crying, Woe! to the wicked city.

On her head, the Baba wears a very old, foul, dingy, frayed, and sleezy yellow shawl, tied carelessly under her head, in a knot like a prize-fighter's fist; one peak of which shawl falls over her head, on to her back, like the peak of the cagoule of a black penitent. It is a very ugly, dirty, head-covering; with a tartan pattern it would be first-cousin to the snood of a Highland shepherdess, and it is even more closely related, in general arrangement, to the unsightly head-shawl worn by the factory-girls of Blackpool and Oldham. But, this is only her every-day head-dress. For Sundays and feast-days she has the kakoschnik, than which no prettier or gracefuller coiffure could be found, after the jewelled turban of the Turkish Sultana has been admitted as the pearl of pearls, and light of the harem of beauty and grace.

The kakoschnik is a shallow shako (that worn by our artillerymen twenty years since, but not exceeding, here, four inches in depth, may be taken as a sufficiently accurate model), shelving from front to back, concave as to summit, and terminated at the back with a short, fan-like veil of white lace. The kakoschnik is worn quite at the back of the head: the parting of the hair, as far as where our tortoiseshell-comb uprises in the back hair, being left uncovered. In wet weather, this kakoschnik is but an inefficient protection for the head; but the Baba disdains, when once she has assumed the national head-dress, to cover it with the inelegant shawl-cowl. In a dripping shower she will, at most, pull the skirt of her gown over her head. The substructure of the kakoschnik is buckram—more frequently pasteboard. It is covered with the richest and brightest-coloured material the Baba can afford to buy. It is decorated with trinkets,

spangles, silver copeck pieces (now prohibited), gold-lace: nay, according to her degree in the peasant hierarchy, seed pearls, and, in extreme cases of wealth, real precious stones. The Russian women have to the full as great a penchant for decorating their persons with gold and silver coins as have the maids of Athens and the khanums of Turkey for twining sequins and piastres in their hair. A few years ago there was quite a mania in society for wearing bracelets and necklaces formed of new silver five-copeck pieces, strung together. These are of about the size of our silver pennies—somewhat thicker, but not broader in diameter (a copeck is worth about five-eighths of a halfpenny), and being beautifully coined, are delightful little ornaments. But the government sternly prohibited such a defacing of the current coin of the Empire, and plainly hinted at the possible eventualities of the Pleiti or whip and Siberia, in the case of recalcitrant coin-tamperers.

The Russian girl who possesses a jewelled kakoschnik must, of course, have the rest of her costume to match, in richness and elegance. Some travellers—Mr. Leozon le Duc, and M. Hommaire de Hell among the number—declare that they have been in Russian villages on great feast-days, the Pentecost, for example, where the maidens were promenading in kirtles of cloth of gold, tunics of satin and silver brocade; white silk-stockings; kakoschniks blazing with real gold and jewellery; red morocco shoes; lace veils of application-work falling to the heels; heavy bracelets of gold and silver; pearl necklaces; diamond ear-rings; long tresses of hair interlaced with ribbons and artificial flowers. Nothing richer or more picturesque than this could well be imagined; but I am afraid that Annualism is marvellously prevalent in the description. Novaïa Ladoga, I think, is mentioned as one of the villages where this splendacious costume is to be seen. That there is a Lake of Ladoga, I know; and a village by the name of Novaïa Ladoga is probable; but I am apprehensive that the way to that village on gala days is difficult, and dangerous, and doubtful; that the only way to go to it is "straight down the crooked lane, and all round the square;" and that the Pentecost time, when the village maidens walk about in cloth of gold, red morocco shoes, and diamond ear-rings, will be in the year of Beranger's millenium.

LEFT, AND NEVER CALLED FOR.

I WAS once upon the deck of a packet bound for Rotterdam; the ropes that lashed her to the wharf had been slipped off, and the ropes with buffers (like an exaggerated species of that seaweed which you pop with your fingers) were already dropped to ease us off the wooden pier, when a young lady who stood near me clasped her hands, and exclaimed:

"O, sir, my box! The black one there! It is left behind!"

It was a large oblong ark with handles—a governess's beyond all doubt—through which could be seen almost, the scanty wardrobe and the little wealth of books, as though its sides were glass.

"Stop her!" (meaning the ship) screamed I, indignantly.

"Move on a-head!" roared the captain.

"It's all I have in the world," sobbed the poor governess.

I ran up the iron ladder to those cross planks which are forbidden to passengers, and wherefrom the commander was giving forth those Mede and Persian orders which are echoed by the fiend beneath.

"Do you know this name, sir?" said I, fiercely, presenting him with my card.

"Yes," said he, rather subdued; "but you ain't—"

"No," said I, "I am not, but I am, hem?—a relation of his."

"Then, put her a-starn!" said he; and a-starn she was put accordingly, and the box was taken on board.

The head of the packet company's firm and I happened to enjoy the use of the same name, though I had not really the pleasure of his acquaintance. I think, however, as in the case of Uncle Toby's oath, that the ingenious device may be pardoned for the sake of the feeling which prompted it. I was determined that, even to the detriment of truth, the poor lady's box—the whole of her worldly goods, as she told me afterwards—should not be left behind.

I have purposely been sentimental thus far over luggage, to prevent these words awakening ridicule and absurd association. If mere things that have lost their owners excite our sympathy, how much more should living creatures—men, women, and children—who are cut off, forlorn, abandoned, and, in two words, left behind! I consider that a dog in a strange city, who has lost his master, to be one of the most affecting spectacles in nature. How he threads the mighty throng, with his eager nose upon the pavement, or lifts his anxious eyes to the face of every passer-by, standing upon three legs, poor fellow, as if that should benefit him, giving utterance, from time to time, to a whine of desolation more expressive of abandonment and a breaking heart than whole cantos of morbid self-love; set upon by his own savage kind, saluted with a hundred kicks, flicked at by idle carmen, regarded feloniously by brutal dog-fanciers; but, indifferent to challenge, to ill-usage, to personal liberty, and even to the pangs of hunger, in that vain search of his for the beloved master by whom he has so carelessly been left and never called for. Happy for him will it be when his miserable existence shall have been cut short by wheel of 'buss or by edict of town council in the dog-days, when he becomes a portion for cats or an ingredient

of sausages. My own profession and principles are those of a philanthropist, but—nay, therefore—if I had the power, and caught any man or boy who knew of the forlorn and piteous state of that poor brute, ill-using and tormenting it, I would hang him higher than Haman.

Shall I ever forget that agony of despair, that utter desolation, which I myself experienced during my first few days at a boarding-school—the first time I was left behind? When the shadow of my mother, as she bent over me for the last time, had been withdrawn; when the noise of the wheels which conveyed her home (home!) had died away; when the accents of my schoolmaster—as different from those in which he spoke two minutes back as a grating nutmeg from the fall of wine through a silver strainer—smote harshly upon my ears with—

"You had better join your new friends in the playground, sir!"

How all the memories of my happy childhood rushed through my little brain in that one moment; how dear seemed every kindness of which I had recked so lightly, how gentle every hand whose pressure I had not cared to understand! How the smoothing of the pillow, and the soothing of the pain, came back to reproach me with ingratitude, and the thousand pleasures of my young life to pierce me with regret! My new friends in the playground, I was pretty certain, were not concocting plans to insure my happiness, and those companions of my solitude did not belie my suspicions. How mockingly familiar they were in their inquiries after papa and mamma, how cynically interested about my little sister, how hypocritically sentimental upon the rheumatism which I told them my old nurse Mathison was suffering from in the left knee; and, when I had communicated everything, with what a hearty good-will the biggest boy knocked me down, and the rest kicked me back when I attempted to get up again! This incident, so charming to the advocates of school discipline, and so illustrative of our educational moral training, made but little impression upon me, except physically, in bumps and bruises. I have thought much of this since, however, in my position of philanthropist, and whenever a similar case occurs I would hang—not the poor brutal boys, but their learned and, perhaps, reverend preceptors, under whose rule such abominable instincts are let loose on helpless and unoffending objects. As I say, however, this was, in my case, rather a relief, for having been hurt a good deal about the head, and bleeding a little from the mouth, I was carried up-stairs and put in dormitory at once—a long bare room with five white beds in it beside my own, clean as snow, and almost as comfortless. I just beheld it for an instant, and the uninteresting vision passed away. But, O! for that indifferent chamber over the saddle-room at home, where the old coachman slept, and my beloved playmate the knife-boy; and for one look of my unsympathised-with old nurse Mathison; and one tuck-up of my bed-clothes by her affectionate hands! Towards nearer and dearer than these my full heart did not dare to flutter, or, I verily believe, it would have burst upon its way; tears from the depths of some divine despair at last relieved me, and I revelled in what was, by contrast to the smothered passion, a luxury of grief. Robinson Crusoe—I made these parallels out of my stock of infant reading, but without deriving any consolation therefrom—Robinson Crusoe, when first cast ashore upon his island, enjoyed high spirits compared with mine, for he had not then, as I had, discovered that he shared it with savages. Captain Bligh, cut adrift with his ship's biscuit and a bottle of rum, was, in his jolly-boat and amongst his companions, to be relatively envied. Philip Quarll—I was calling to mind the superior advantages of that recluse over myself when up came the school to bed. They ascended the carpetless stairs to their respective resting-places with about the same disturbance that the builders of Babel must have gone about erecting their last finished storey with; and yet they were in their stockings only, for I heard a tremendous noise of kicking off shoes at the bottom flight, and the slippers, which each had been there furnished with, were merely used as weapons of offence and retaliation. Smacks like the report of pocket-pistols gave warning of the approach of my five companions, who were driven in by a superior force from the room opposite. They dipped the ends of their towels in jugs, however, and with these ingenious weapons at once repelled the enemy; moreover, a Cavé, or sentinel, was set at the door with a bolster, to guard against surprise, while the other four disrobed themselves for action. There was war declared, as it seemed, between our dormitory and the next, which was at once both a bold and a perfidious dormitory, hard to beat, and whom no treaty could bind; and we had an awful time of it. Often, in the dead of night, when sleep was knitting up the ravelled sleeve of care, has my pillow been abstracted, and myself half suffocated by repeated blows; often has water been poured upon me five hours before the usual time for performing the morning ablution; often have my limbs been deprived of blanket, sheet, and counterpane, at one fell swoop. The next room never slept. Our outposts in the Crimea was a joke to the life I led in those times. This first night, however, our candle having been immediately dowsed, or extinguished, by the invading force, my presence was, for some time, undiscovered. I lay with beating heart, motionless through fear and sorrow, until the moment should arrive when mutual animosity was to be buried—I expected it—in a common object of persecution. Not till the usher

came to take away our candle, and brought a light of his own with him, was my being recognised by my companions. I can only compare their horrid exultation at that moment to that which demons are said to testify at any unexpected accession to their party. They executed a pas-de-cinq at once, partly on the floor, but principally, and always three at a time, upon my body; they made of me an extempore battering-ram, stole softly out into the passage and knocked over the opposition Cavé with that astounding weapon; they—but it is enough to say that they behaved as only the real, good old, constitutional, pattern, Parliament-belauded British schoolboy, when he gets a forlorn victim to torment, and is in the enjoyment of good animal spirits, can behave. I have heard, indeed, that Caffres, when intoxicated and under the influence of hereditary revenge, are almost as cruel, but I don't believe it.

For my part, that first night at school has stood out for my life long a sublime memorial of wretchedness, compared with which all other possible miseries fade away and are not. Toil, poverty, exile, nay, sea-sickness itself, are trifles light as air when weighed against that. When I think of my natural sensitiveness at that time, and of my extreme youth, it is positively a wonder to me that I survived. After I had been sufficiently pounded, torn to pieces, trodden on, I was let fall somewhere, and molested no further. Then it began to seem to me that I had been dropped ever so long ago out of Heaven where my mother lived, and was never more to return to it again. There was indeed an appointed limit for the banishment, but it was so far off that it appeared almost nominal. I counted it, however, hour by hour: thirteen weeks, ninety-one days, two thousand one hundred and eight-four hours, or one hundred and thirty-one thousand and forty minutes, to the vacation. What had I done to deserve all this? I pondered. What good was to come of it? Would it not be better to die! And now I fell asleep, and dreamed the sweetest of dreams, about my sister Harriet and the pony; of haymaking in the fields at home and syllabub afterwards; of how, above all, I was never—never to leave home again; of my father bringing me a watch upon my birthday, and saying, with an affectionate smile——

"A quarter to seven, young gents, a quarter to seven."

Alas! I was awakened by the school butler saying this as he came to call us, as I lay upon the bare boards bruised and shivering, among strange cruel faces—left behind at school; and never, or as good as never, to be called for.

It was after I lost my seven thousand pounds in the rag and bone business, and was existing upon fifty pounds per annum, paid quarterly, that I revisited, after ten years' absence, the University of Oxford. I was on foot and weary at the end of this my second day's journey from London, and I sat down in a field upon the right of Bagley Wood, that looks down upon the town of towns. There was a gate close by, over which I remembered to have leaped my horse upon my last visit to this place. Three of my most intimate college friends were then with me—Travers of Trinity, Stuart of Brazenose, and Gory Gumps, which was what we all called Grindwell of Magdalen, but why we did so I had forgotten. Our conversation on that same day had been about our futures when we should have to leave this ancient place, whose high and noble associations had had less effect upon us, perhaps, than its genial influences. We knew then that we should one day regret that time of our hot youth when we walked in the ways of our heart and in the sight of our eyes, putting sorrow far away from us—when friends were many and foes were none, and all the months were May; but I, for my part, had never guessed how bitterly. I could never have looked forward—or I should, as a philanthropist, have slain myself—to this miserable hour, ten years away, when the beautiful river yonder, glittering in the sun, upon which I had so often passed the summer noons, should be as the waters of bitterness that came in even over my soul. I could see the green Christchurch meadows, and the thin dark stream of Cherwell, and that fair tall tower of Magdalen standing by the bridge; and the whole prospect mocked me with its beauty more than the mirage of the desert mocks the traveller. The water was there, truly, but I was never more to drink of it. I got up and walked towards Oxford with a weight at my heart—a physical weight, even as it seemed, heavier than that of the knapsack I carried on my shoulders. Two or three parties of young horsemen met or overtook me at full speed, covering me with mud from their horses' hoofs. Then I came amongst the constitutionalists, the reading men, who go out walking for their health's sake; and when I had crossed the Isis, among those in cap and gown, it was like a perfect retrogression of my life ten years, except for some vague, frightful difference that I could not altogether lose sight of. Such of the conversation, even, as I caught of the passers-by was precisely such as I used to hold and hear myself; about the bump that should have been decided foul—of him that had been screwed at supper—of him that was a safe double-first. The great Christchurch clock pealed forth the quarter to our Magdalen dinner-hour as I passed its gateway. We three had ridden in upon that day I mentioned, exactly at this very time. Travers was now a member of parliament, of which we had always suspected him at the Union, where he had been very noisy; Stuart, who was always going up to town to dine with city companies, and

who had brought us down on one occasion (it seemed yesterday) a white satin dinner carte to laugh at, composed entirely of French dishes, with the very appropriate motto at top of it of Domine Dirige Nos—Stuart, I saw by the newspapers, had been trying to be Mayor of Glasgow lately; Gory Gumps was a Fellow of my own college, Magdalen, I knew. It was to see him that I had come down to Oxford, uninvited; but now that I was there my courage failed me. I had got visible woollen stockings on, a bad hat, a coat that had lost a button; still I was hungry, and I pressed up that street which might well be called the Beautiful, but which is named the High. I rang the Magdalen gate-bell, and the porter, the jolly old porter whom I knew so much better than he knew me, came out and stared superciliously.

"Is Gory—I mean is Mr. Grindwell in college?" said I, with a beating heart.

"Do you mean Mr. Grindwell, the dean?"

"No," answered I, hastily; "by no means—not the dean;" and I turned away. I could not quite stand that. Travers an M.P.—Stuart an Alderman—these were enough removed from me: but Gory Gumps a Dean! No, I felt that I was left behind, too far for recognition.

When my family, who suffered also very severely in the rag and bone failure, had made up their minds to emigrate in a body, I, as a philanthropist, refused to deprive this country of my saving presence, and still remained in England. I went down to Liverpool to see my people off, as the saying is. It was a sad sight truly. My mother, indeed—she for whom my little heart had yearned so when at school—was left behind in that green churchyard in the south which she had always wished to be her final resting-place; but, there was my father to take leave of—grey-haired and aged—and that beloved old Dame Mathison, whose rheumatism in the left knee had long become chronic, but who nevertheless would not be parted from my dear sister Harriet. She thought, kind soul, that she should be able to defend and watch over her, better even than her husband, who was a true brother to me as he was a son to my father. Two of these four friends of mine I could never, in the course of nature, hope to see again: the other two would certainly be separated from me for long years—perhaps for life. That inquisitive portion of our interiors which will rise up into our throats when we are saying good bye to those we love, would, I thought, have suffocated me. Reflect, O! happy ones, unseparated at home, what a thing it is to be parted from parent, from sister, from all; not by death—for before him, perforce, the whole human race must bow submissive—but by poverty, which carries off by a sort of premature death so many into exile every year—a new strange land awaiting those who go, and an old land that has become strange through the exiles' absence awaiting those who stay.

Be not extortionate, O cabman! upon the quay; that extra sixpence which you have pillaged from the old man's scanty purse, you will be glad, if it were possible, to restore a hundred-fold—to atone for with all you have. Gently, official, gently, as it is only a question of a minute. Let the girl hang round her brother's neck a little longer, and thrust him not aside; it will be better for you, very surely. Not that the old man, nor his child, nor I, have a thought now for injustice or for insult; our eyes are blinded, our poor hearts are crushed. Never so near as when we part, is a true saying. "Good bye," "God be with you," and once more, "Good bye." I am hurried from the deck of the vessel by a weeping crowd, and can stand only at the edge of the quay, no nearer to those four who are waving their pocket-handkerchiefs ever again. It is a cold misty morning, and the small rain is falling steadily; but I see them plainly yet. The huge packet is cast off; the first half-turn of those enormous paddles, which must ceaselessly revolve for so many thousand miles, is made; the people on the shore begin a sort of choking cheer, and those on board reply to it a little more sturdily. The ship forges ahead; the band strikes up a melody that is dear to those four and me, and which makes our tears flow freely. I see their waving handkerchiefs once more—or I think I see them—and then over the sad waters into the misty day the vessel speeds, and the fog closes slowly over it. I stand upon the wet dock, gazing mournfully alone, and Left Behind!

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THE WRECK.

I WAS apprenticed to the Sea when I was twelve years old, and I have encountered a great deal of rough weather, both literal and metaphorical. It has always been my opinion since I first possessed such a thing as an opinion, that the man who knows only one subject is next tiresome to the man who knows no subject. Therefore, in the course of my life I have taught myself whatever I could, and although I am not an educated man, I am able, I am thankful to say, to have an intelligent interest in most things.

A person might suppose, from reading the above, that I am in the habit of holding forth about number one. That is not the case. Just as if I was to come into a room among strangers, and must either be introduced or introduce myself, so I have taken the liberty of passing these few remarks, simply and plainly that it may be known who and what I am. I will add no more of the sort than that my name is William George Ravender, that I was born at Penrith half a year after my own father was drowned, and that I am on the second day of this present blessed Christmas week of one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six, fifty-six years of age.

When the rumour first went flying up and down that there was gold in California—which, as most people know, was before it was discovered in the British colony of Australia—I was in the West Indies, trading among the Islands. Being in command and likewise part-owner of a smart schooner, I had my work cut out for me, and I was doing it. Consequently, gold in California was no business of mine.

But, by the time when I came home to England again, the thing was as clear as your hand held up before you at noon-day. There was Californian gold in the museums and in the goldsmiths' shops, and the very first time I went upon 'Change, I met a friend of mine (a seafaring man like myself), with a Californian nugget hanging to his watch-chain. I handled it. It was as like a peeled walnut with bits unevenly broken off here and there, and then electrotyped all over, as ever I saw anything in my life.

I am a single man (she was too good for this world and for me, and she died six weeks before our marriage-day), so when I am ashore, I live in my house at Poplar. My house at Poplar is taken care of and kept ship-shape by, an old lady who was my mother's maid before I was born. She is as handsome and as upright as any old lady in the world. She is as fond of me as if she had ever had an only son, and I was he. Well do I know wherever I sail that she never lays down her head at night without having said, "Merciful Lord! bless and preserve William George Ravender, and send him safe home, through Christ our Saviour!" I have thought of it in many a dangerous moment, when it has done me no harm, I am sure.

In my house at Poplar, along with this old lady, I lived quiet for best part of a year: having had a long spell of it among the Islands, and having (which was very uncommon in me) taken the fever rather badly. At last, being strong and hearty, and having read every book I could lay hold of, right out, I was walking down Leadenhall Street in the City of London, thinking of turning-to again, when I met what I call Smithick and

Watersby of Liverpool. I chanced to lift up my eyes from looking in at a ship's chronometer in a window, and I saw him bearing down upon me, head on.

It is, personally, neither Smithick, nor Watersby, that I here mention, nor was I ever acquainted with any man of either of those names, nor do I think that there has been any one of either of those names in that Liverpool House for years back. But, it is in reality the House itself that I refer to; and a wiser merchant or a truer gentleman never stepped.

"My dear Captain Ravender," says he. "Of all the men on earth, I wanted to see you most. I was on my way to you."

"Well!" says I. "That looks as if you *were* to see me, don't it?" With that, I put my arm in his, and we walked on towards the Royal Exchange, and, when we got there, walked up and down at the back of it where the Clock-Tower is. We walked an hour and more, for he had much to say to me. He had a scheme for chartering a new ship of their own to take out cargo to the diggers and emigrants in California, and to buy and bring back gold. Into the particulars of that scheme I will not enter, and I have no right to enter. All I say of it, is, that it was a very original one, a very fine one, a very sound one, and a very lucrative one, beyond doubt.

He imparted it to me as freely as if I had been a part of himself. After doing so, he made me the handsomest sharing offer that ever was made to me, boy or man—or I believe to any other captain in the Merchant Navy—and he took this round turn to finish with:

"Ravender, you are well aware that the lawlessness of that coast and country at present, is as special as the circumstances in which it is placed. Crews of vessels outward-bound, desert as soon as they make the land; crews of vessels homeward-bound, ship at enormous wages, with the express intention of murdering the captain and seizing the gold freight; no man can trust another, and the devil seems let loose. Now," says he, "you know my opinion of you, and you know I am only expressing it, and with no singularity, when I tell you that you are almost the only man on whose integrity, discretion, and energy—" &c., &c. For, I don't want to repeat what he said, though I was and am sensible of it.

Notwithstanding my being, as I have mentioned, quite ready for a voyage, still I had some doubts of this voyage. Of course I knew, without being told, that there were peculiar difficulties and dangers in it, a long way over and above those which attend all voyages. It must not be supposed that I was afraid to face them; but, in my opinion a man has no manly motive or sustainment in his own breast for facing dangers, unless he has well considered what they are, and is able quietly to say to himself, "None of these perils can now take me by surprise; I shall know what to do for the best in any of them; all the rest lies in the higher and greater hands to which I humbly commit myself." On this principle I have so attentively considered (regarding it as my duty) all the hazards I have ever been able to think of, in the ordinary way of storm, shipwreck, and fire at sea, that I hope I should be prepared to do, in any of those cases, whatever could be done, to save the lives entrusted to my charge.

As I was thoughtful, my good friend proposed that he should leave me to walk there as long as I liked, and that I should dine with him by-and-by at his club in Pall Mall. I accepted the invitation, and I walked up and down there, quarter-deck fashion, a matter of a couple of hours; now and then looking up at the weathercock as I might have looked up aloft; and now and then taking a look into Cornhill, as I might have taken a look over the side.

All dinner-time, and all after-dinner-time, we talked it over again. I gave him my views of his plan, and he very much approved of the same. I told him I had nearly decided, but not quite. "Well, well," says he, "come down to Liverpool to-morrow with me, and see the Golden Mary." I liked the name (her name was Mary, and she was golden, if golden stands for good), so I began to feel that it was almost done when I said I would go to Liverpool. On the next morning but one we were on board the Golden Mary. I might have known, from his asking me to come down and see her, what she was. I declare her to have been the completest and most exquisite Beauty that ever I set my eyes upon.

We had inspected every timber in her, and had come back to the gangway to go ashore from the dock-basin, when I put out my hand to my friend. "Touch upon it," says I, "and touch heartily. I take command of this ship, and I am hers and yours, if I can get John Steadiman for my chief mate."

John Steadiman had sailed with me four voyages. The first voyage, John was third mate out to China, and came home second. The other three voyages, he was my first officer. At this time of chartering the Golden Mary, he was aged thirty-two. A brisk, bright, blue-eyed fellow, a very neat figure and rather under the middle size, never out of the way and never in it, a face that pleased everybody and that all children took to, a habit of going about singing as cheerily as a blackbird, and a perfect sailor.

We were in one of those Liverpool hackney-coaches in less than a minute, and we cruised about in her upwards of three hours, looking for John. John had come home from Van Diemen's Land barely a month before, and I had heard of him as taking a frisk in Liverpool. We asked after him, among many other places, at the two boarding-houses he

was fondest of, and we found he had had a week's spell at each of them; but, he had gone here and gone there, and had set off "to lay out on the main-to'-gallant-yard of the highest Welsh mountain" (so he had told the people of the house), and where he might be then, or when he might come back nobody could tell us. But it was surprising, to be sure, to see how every face brightened the moment there was mention made of the name of Mr. Steadiman.

We were taken aback at meeting with no better luck, and we had wore ship and put her head for my friends, when, as we were jogging through the streets, I clap my eyes on John himself coming out of a toyshop! He was carrying a little boy, and conducting two uncommon pretty women to their coach, and he told me afterwards that he had never in his life seen one of the three before, but that he was so taken with them on looking in at the toy-shop while they were buying the child a cranky Noah's Ark, very much down by the head, that he had gone in and asked the ladies' permission to treat him to a tolerably correct Cutter there was in the window, in order that such a handsome boy might not grow up with a lubberly idea of naval architecture.

We stood off and on until the ladies' coachman began to give way, and then we hailed John. On his coming aboard of us, I told him, very gravely, what I had said to my friend. It struck him, as he said himself, amidships. He was quite shaken by it. "Captain Ravender," were John Steadiman's words, "such an opinion from you is true commendation, and I'll sail round the world with you for twenty years if you hoist the signal, and stand by you for ever!" And now indeed I felt that it was done, and that the Golden Mary was afloat.

Grass never grew yet under the feet of Smithick and Watersby. The riggers were out of that ship in a fortnight's time, and we had begun taking in cargo. John was always aboard, seeing everything stowed with his own eyes; and whenever I went aboard myself, early or late, whether he was below in the hold, or on deck at the hatchway, or overhauling his cabin, nailing up pictures in it of the Blush Roses of England, the Blue Belles of Scotland, and the female Shamrock of Ireland: of a certainty I heard John singing like a blackbird.

We had room for twenty passengers. Our sailing advertisement was no sooner out, than we might have taken these, twenty times over. In entering our men, I and John (both together) picked them, and we entered none but good hands—as good as were to be found in that port. And so, in a good ship of the best build, well owned, well arranged, well officered, well manned, well found in all respects, we parted with our pilot at a quarter past four o'clock in the afternoon of the seventh of March, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, and stood with a fair wind out to sea.

It may be easily believed that up to that time I had had no leisure to be intimate with my passengers. The most of them were then in their berths sea-sick; however, in going among them, telling them what was good for them, persuading them not to be there, but to come up on deck and feel the breeze, and in rousing them with a joke, or a comfortable word, I made acquaintance with them, perhaps, in a more friendly and confidential way from the first, than I might have done at the cabin table.

Of my passengers, I need only particularise, just at present, a bright-eyed, blooming young wife who was going out to join her husband in California, taking with her their only child, a little girl of three years old, whom he had never seen; a sedate young woman in black, some five years older (about thirty, as I should say), who was going out to join a brother; and an old gentleman, a good deal like a hawk if his eyes had been better and not so red, who was always talking, morning, noon, and night, about the gold discovery. But, whether he was making the voyage, thinking his old arms could dig for gold, or whether his speculation was to buy it, or, to barter for it, or to cheat for it, or to snatch it anyhow from other people, was his secret. He kept his secret.

These three and the child were the soonest well. The child was a most engaging child, to be sure, and very fond of me: though I am bound to admit that John Steadiman and I were borne on her pretty little books in reverse order, and that he was captain there, and I was mate. It was beautiful to watch her with John, and it was beautiful to watch John with her. Few would have thought it possible, to see John playing at bo-peep round the mast, that he was the man who had caught up an iron bar and struck a Malay and a Maltese dead, as they were gliding with their knives down the cabin stair aboard the barque Old England, when the captain lay ill in his cot, off Saugar Point. But he was; and give him his back against a bulwark, he would have done the same by half a dozen of them. The name of the young mother was Mrs. Atherfield, the name of the young lady in black was Miss Coleshaw, and the name of the old gentleman was Mr. Rarx.

As the child had a quantity of shining fair hair, clustering in curls all about her face, and as her name was Lucy, Steadiman gave her the name of the Golden Lucy. So, we had the Golden Lucy and the Golden Mary; and John kept up the idea to that extent as he and the child went playing about the decks, that I believe she used to think the ship was alive somehow—a sister or companion, going to the same place as herself. She liked to be by the wheel, and in fine weather, I have often stood by the man

whose trick it was at the wheel, only to hear her, sitting near my feet, talking to the ship. Never had a child such a doll before, I suppose; but she made a doll of the Golden Mary, and used to dress her up by tying ribbons and little bits of finery to the belaying-pins; and nobody ever moved them, unless it was to save them from being blown away.

Of course I took charge of the two young women, and I called them "my dear," and they never minded, knowing that whatever I said was said in a fatherly and protecting spirit. I gave them their places on each side of me at dinner, Mrs. Atherfield on my right and Miss Coleshaw on my left; and I directed the unmarried lady to serve out the breakfast, and the married lady to serve out the tea. Likewise I said to my black steward in their presence, "Tom Snow, these two ladies are equally the mistresses of this house, and do you obey their orders equally;" at which Tom laughed, and they all laughed.

Old Mr. Rarx was not a pleasant man to look at, nor yet to talk to, or to be with, for no one could help seeing that he was a sordid and selfish character, and that he had warped further and further out of the straight with time. Not but what he was on his best behaviour with us, as everybody was; for, we had no bickering among us, for'ard or aft. I only mean to say, he was not the man one would have chosen for a messmate. If choice there had been, one might even have gone a few points out of one's course, to say, "No! Not him!" But, there was one curious inconsistency in Mr. Rarx. That was, that he took an astonishing interest in the child. He looked, and, I may add, he was, one of the last of men to care at all for a child, or to care much for any human creature. Still, he went so far as to be habitually uneasy, if the child was long on deck, out of his sight. He was always afraid of her falling overboard, or falling down a hatchway, or of a block or what not coming down upon her from the rigging in the working of the ship, or of her getting some hurt or other. He used to look at her and touch her, as if she was something precious to him. He was always solicitous about her not injuring her health, and constantly entreated her mother to be careful of it. This was so much the more curious, because the child did not like him, but used to shrink away from him, and would not even put out her hand to him without coaxing from others. I believe that every soul on board frequently noticed this, and that not one of us understood it. However, it was such a plain fact, that John Steadiman said more than once when old Mr. Rarx was not within earshot, that if the Golden Mary felt a tenderness for the dear old gentleman she carried in her lap, she must be bitterly jealous of the Golden Lucy.

Before I go any further with this narrative, I will state that our ship was a barque of three hundred tons, carrying a crew of eighteen men, a second mate in addition to John, a carpenter, an armourer or smith, and two apprentices (one a Scotch boy, poor little fellow). We had three boats; the Long-boat, capable of carrying twenty-five men; the Cutter, capable of carrying fifteen; and the Surf-boat, capable of carrying ten. I put down the capacity of these boats according to the numbers they were really meant to hold.

We had tastes of bad weather and head-winds, of course; but, on the whole we had as fine a run as any reasonable man could expect, for sixty days. I then began to enter two remarks in the ship's Log and in my Journal; first, that there was an unusual and amazing quantity of ice; second, that the nights were most wonderfully dark, in spite of the ice.

For five days and a half, it seemed quite useless and hopeless to alter the ship's course so as to stand out of the way of this ice. I made what southing I could; but, all that time, we were beset by it. Mrs. Atherfield after standing by me on deck once, looking for some time in an awed manner at the great bergs that surrounded us, said in a whisper, "O! Captain Ravender, it looks as if the whole solid earth had changed into ice, and broken up!" I said to her, laughing, "I don't wonder that it does, to your inexperienced eyes, my dear." But I had never seen a twentieth part of the quantity, and, in reality, I was pretty much of her opinion.

However, at two P.M. on the afternoon of the sixth day, that is to say, when we were sixty-six days out, John Steadiman who had gone aloft, sang out from the top, that the sea was clear ahead. Before four P.M. a strong breeze springing up right astern, we were in open water at sunset. The breeze then freshening into half a gale of wind, and the Golden Mary being a very fast sailer, we went before the wind merrily, all night.

I had thought it impossible that it could be darker than it had been, until the sun, moon, and stars should fall out of the Heavens, and Time should be destroyed; but, it had been next to light, in comparison with what it was now. The darkness was so profound, that looking into it was painful and oppressive—like looking, without a ray of light, into a dense black bandage put as close before the eyes as it could be, without touching them. I doubled the look-out, and John and I stood in the bow side-by-side, never leaving it all night. Yet I should no more have known that he was near me when he was silent, without putting out my arm and touching him, than I should if he had turned in and been fast asleep below. We were not so much looking out, all of us, as listening to the utmost, both with our eyes and ears.

Next day, I found that the mercury in the barometer, which had risen steadily since we

cleared the ice, remained steady. I had had very good observations, with now and then the interruption of a day or so, since our departure. I got the sun at noon, and found that we were in Lat. 58° S., Long. 60° W., off New South Shetland; in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn. We were sixty-seven days out, that day. The ship's reckoning was accurately worked and made up. The ship did her duty admirably, all on board were well, and all hands were as smart, efficient, and contented, as it was possible to be.

When the night came on again as dark as before, it was the eighth night I had been on deck. Nor had I taken more than a very little sleep in the day-time, my station being always near the helm, and often at it, while we were among the ice. Few but those who have tried it can imagine the difficulty and pain of only keeping the eyes open—physically open—under such circumstances, in such darkness. They get struck by the darkness, and blinded by the darkness. They make patterns in it, and they flash in it, as if they had gone out of your head to look at you. On the turn of midnight, John Steadiman, who was alert and fresh (for I had always made him turn in by day), said to me, "Captain Ravender, I entreat of you to go below. I am sure you can hardly stand, and your voice is getting weak, sir. Go below, and take a little rest. I'll call you if a block chafes." I said to John in answer, "Well, well, John! Let us wait till the turn of one o'clock, before we talk about that." I had just had one of the ship's lanterns held up, that I might see how the night went by my watch, and it was then twenty minutes after twelve.

At five minutes before one, John sang out to the boy to bring the lantern again, and, when I told him once more what the time was, entreated and prayed of me to go below. "Captain Ravender," says he, "all's well; we can't afford to have you laid up for a single hour; and I respectfully and earnestly beg of you to go below." The end of it was, that I agreed to do so, on the understanding that if I failed to come up of my own accord within three hours, I was to be punctually called. Having settled that, I left John in charge. But, I called him to me once afterwards, to ask him a question. I had been to look at the barometer, and had seen the mercury still perfectly steady, and had come up the companion again, to take a last look about me—if I can use such a word in reference to such darkness—when I thought that the waves, as the Golden Mary parted them and shook them off, had a hollow sound in them; something that I fancied was a rather unusual reverberation. I was standing by the quarter-deck rail on the starboard side, when I called John aft to me, and bade him listen. He did so with the greatest attention. Turning to me he then said, "Rely upon it, Captain Ravender, you have been without rest too long, and the novelty is only in the state of your sense of hearing." I thought so too by that time, and I think so now, though I can never know for absolute certain in this world, whether it was or not.

When I left John Steadiman in charge, the ship was still going at a great rate through the water. The wind still blew right astern. Though she was making great way, she was under shortened sail, and had no more than she could easily carry. All was snug, and nothing complained. There was a pretty sea running, but not a very high sea neither, nor at all a confused one.

I turned in, as we seaman say, all standing. The meaning of that, is, I did not pull my clothes off—no, not even so much as my coat: though I did my shoes, for my feet were badly swelled with the deck. There was a little swing-lamp alight in my cabin. I thought, as I looked at it before shutting my eyes, that I was so tired of darkness, and troubled by darkness, that I could have gone to sleep best in the midst of a million of flaming gas-lights. That was the last thought I had before I went off, except the prevailing thought that I should not be able to get to sleep at all.

I dreamed that I was back at Penrith again, and was trying to get round the church, which had altered its shape very much since I last saw it, and was cloven all down the middle of the steeple in a most singular manner. Why I wanted to get round the church, I don't know; but, I was as anxious to do it as if my life depended on it. Indeed, I believe it did, in the dream. For all that, I could not get round the church. I was still trying, when I came against it with a violent shock, and was flung out of my cot against the ship's side. Shrieks and a terrific outcry struck me far harder than the bruising timbers, and amidst sounds of grinding and crashing, and a heavy rushing and breaking of water—sounds I understood too well—I made my way on deck. It was not an easy thing to do, for the ship heeled over frightfully, and was beating in a furious manner.

I could not see the men as I went forward, but I could hear that they were hauling in sail, in disorder. I had my trumpet in my hand, and, after directing and encouraging them in this till it was done, I hailed first John Steadiman, and then my second mate, Mr. William Rames. Both answered clearly and steadily. Now, I had practised them and all my crew, as I have ever made it a custom to practise all who sail with me, to take certain stations, and wait my orders, in case of any unexpected crisis. When my voice was heard hailing, and their voices were heard answering, I was aware, through all the noises of the ship and sea, and all the crying of the passengers below, that there was a pause. "Are you ready, Rames?"—"Aye, aye, sir!"—"Then light up, for God's sake!" In a moment he and another were

burning blue-lights, and the ship and all on board seemed to be enclosed in a mist of light, under a great black dome.

The light shone up so high that I could see the huge Iceberg upon which we had struck, cloven at the top and down the middle, exactly like Penrith Church in my dream. At the same moment I could see the watch last relieved, crowding up and down on deck; I could see Mrs. Atherfield and Miss Coleshaw thrown about on the top of the companion as they struggled to bring the child up from below; I could see that the masts were going with the shock and the beating of the ship; I could see the frightful breach stove in on the starboard side, half the length of the vessel, and the sheathing and timbers spirting up; I could see that the Cutter was disabled, in a wreck of broken fragments; and I could see every eye turned upon me. It is my belief that if there had been ten thousand eyes there, I should have seen them all, with their different looks. And all this in a moment. But you must consider what a moment.

I saw the men, as they looked at me, fall towards their appointed stations, like good men and true. If she had not righted, they could have done very little there or anywhere but die—not that it is little for a man to die at his post—I mean they could have done nothing to save the passengers and themselves. Happily, however, the violence of the shock with which we had so determinedly borne down direct on that fatal Iceberg, as if it had been our destination instead of our destruction, had so smashed and pounded the ship that she got off in this same instant, and righted. I did not want the carpenter to tell me she was filling and going down; I could see and hear that. I gave Rames the word to lower the Long-boat and the Surf-boat, and I myself told off the men for each duty. Not one hung back, or came before the other. I now whispered to John Steadiman, "John, I stand at the gangway here, to see every soul on board safe over the side. You shall have the next post of honor, and shall be the last but one to leave the ship. Bring up the passengers, and range them behind me; and put what provision and water you can get at, in the boats. Cast your eye for'ard, John, and you'll see you have not a moment to lose."

My noble fellows got the boats over the side, as orderly as I ever saw boats lowered with any sea running, and, when they were launched, two or three of the nearest men in them as they held on, rising and falling with the swell, called out, looking up at me, "Captain Ravender, if anything goes wrong with us and you are saved, remember we stood by you!"—"We'll all stand by one another ashore, yet, please God, my lads!" says I. "Hold on bravely, and be tender with the women."

The women were an example to us. They trembled very much, but they were quiet and perfectly collected. "Kiss me, Captain Ravender," says Mrs. Atherfield, "and God in Heaven bless you, you good man!" "My dear," says I, "those words are better for me than a life-boat." I held her child in my arms till she was in the boat, and then kissed the child and handed her safe down. I now said to the people in her, "You have got your freight, my lads, all but me, and I am not coming yet awhile. Pull away from the ship, and keep off!"

That was the Long-boat. Old Mr. Rarx was one of her complement, and he was the only passenger who had greatly misbehaved since the ship struck. Others had been a little wild, which was not to be wondered at, and not very blameable; but, he had made a lamentation and uproar which it was dangerous for the people to hear, as there is always contagion in weakness and selfishness. His incessant cry had been that he must not be separated from the child, that he couldn't see the child, and that he and the child must go together. He had even tried to wrest the child out of my arms, that he might keep her in his. "Mr. Rarx," said I to him when it came to that, "I have a loaded pistol in my pocket; and if you don't stand out of the gangway, and keep perfectly quiet, I shall shoot you through the heart, if you have got one." Says he, "You won't do murder, Captain Ravender?" "No, sir," says I, "I won't murder forty-four people to humour you, but I'll shoot you to save them." After that, he was quiet, and stood shivering a little way off, until I named him to go over the side.

The Long-boat being cast off, the Surf-boat was soon filled. There only remained aboard the Golden Mary, John Mullion the man who had kept on burning the blue-lights (and who had lighted every new one at every old one before it went out, as quietly as if he had been at an illumination); John Steadiman; and myself. I hurried those two into the Surf-boat, called to them to keep off, and waited with a grateful and relieved heart for the Long-boat to come and take me in, if she could. I looked at my watch, and it showed me, by the blue-light, ten minutes past two. They lost no time. As soon as she was near enough, I swung myself in to her, and called to the men, "With a will, lads! She's reeling!" We were not an inch too far out of the inner vortex of her going down, when, by the blue-light which John Mullion still burnt in the bow of the Surf-boat, we saw her lurch, and plunge to the bottom head-foremost. The child cried, weeping wildly, "O the dear Golden Mary! O look at her! Save her! Save the poor Golden Mary!" And then the light burnt out, and the black dome seemed to come down upon us.

I suppose if we had all stood a-top of a mountain, and seen the whole remainder of the world sink away from under us, we could hardly have felt more shocked and solitary

than we did when we knew we were alone on the wide ocean, and that the beautiful ship in which most of us had been securely asleep within half an hour was gone for ever. There was an awful silence in our boat, and such a kind of palsy on the rowers and the man at the rudder, that I felt they were scarcely keeping her before the sea. I spoke out then, and said, "Let every one here thank the Lord for our preservation!" All the voices answered (even the child's), "We thank the Lord!" I then said the Lord's Prayer, and all hands said it after me with a solemn murmuring. Then I gave the word "Cheerily, O men, Cherrily!" and I felt that they were handling the boat again as a boat ought to be handled.

The Surf-boat now burnt another blue-light to show us where they were, and we made for her, and laid ourselves as nearly alongside of her as we dared. I had always kept my boats with a coil or two of good stout stuff in each of them, so both boats had a rope at hand. We made a shift, with much labor and trouble, to get near enough to one another to divide the blue-lights (they were no use after that night, for the sea-water soon got at them), and to get a tow-rope out between us. All night long we kept together, sometimes obliged to cast off the rope, and sometimes getting it out again, and all of us wearying for the morning—which appeared so long in coming that old Mr. Rarx screamed out, in spite of his fears of me, "The world is drawing to an end, and the sun will never rise any more!"

When the day broke, I found that we were all huddled together in a miserable manner. We were deep in the water; being, as I found on mustering, thirty-one in number, or at least six too many. In the Surf-boat they were fourteen in number, being at least four too many. The first thing I did, was to get myself passed to the rudder—which I took from that time—and to get Mrs. Atherfield, her child, and Miss Coleshaw, passed on to sit next me. As to old Mr. Rarx, I put him in the bow, as far from us as I could. And I put some of the best men near us, in order that if I should drop, there might be a skilful hand ready to take the helm.

The sea moderating as the sun came up, though the sky was cloudy and wild, we spoke the other boat, to know what stores they had, and to overhaul what we had. I had a compass in my pocket, a small telescope, a double-barrelled pistol, a knife, and a fire-box and matches. Most of my men had knives, and some had a little tobacco: some, a pipe as well. We had a mug among us, and an iron-spoon. As to provisions, there were in my boat two bags of biscuit, one piece of raw beef, one piece of raw pork, a bag of coffee, roasted but not ground (thrown in, I imagine, by mistake, for something else), two small casks of water, and about half-a-gallon of rum in a keg. The Surf-boat, having rather more rum than we, and fewer to drink it, gave us, as I estimated, another quart int our keg. In return, we gave them three double handfuls of coffee, tied up in a piece of a handkerchief; they reported that they had aboard besides, a bag of biscuit, a piece of beef, a small cask of water, a small box of lemons, and a Dutch cheese. It took a long time to make these exchanges, and they were not made without risk to both parties; the sea running quite high enough to make our approaching near to one another very hazardous. In the bundle with the coffee, I conveyed to John Steadiman (who had a ship's compass with him), a paper written in pencil, and torn from my pocket-book, containing the course I meant to steer, in the hope of making land, or being picked up by some vessel—I say in the hope, though I had little hope of either deliverance. I then sang out to him, so as all might hear, that if we two boats could live or die together, we would; but, that if we should be parted by the weather, and join company no more, they should have our prayers and blessings, and we asked for theirs. We then gave them three cheers, which they returned, and I saw the men's heads droop in both boats as they fell to their oars again.

These arrangements had occupied the general attention advantageously for all, though (as I expressed in the last sentence) they ended in a sorrowful feeling. I now said a few words to my fellow-voyagers on the subject of the small stock of food on which our lives depended if they were preserved from the great deep, and on the rigid necessity of our eking it out in the most frugal manner. One and all replied that whatever allowance I thought best to lay down should be strictly kept to. We made a pair of scales out of a thin scrap of iron-plating and some twine, and I got together for weights such of the heaviest buttons among us as I calculated made up some fraction over two ounces. This was the allowance of solid food served out once a-day to each, from that time to the end; with the addition of a coffee-berry, or sometimes half a one, when the weather was very fair, for breakfast. We had nothing else whatever, but half a pint of water each per day, and sometimes, when we were coldest and weakest, a teaspoonful of rum each, served out as a dram. I know how learnedly it can be shown that rum is poison, but I also know that in this case, as in all similar cases I have ever read of—which are numerous—no words can express the comfort and support derived from it. Nor have I the least doubt that it saved the lives of far more than half our number. Having mentioned half a pint of water as our daily allowance, I ought to observe that sometimes we had less, and sometimes we had more; for, much rain fell, and we caught it in a canvas stretched for the purpose.

Thus, at that tempestuous time of the

year, and in that tempestuous part of the world, we shipwrecked people rose and fell with the waves. It is not my intention to relate (if I can avoid it), such circumstances appertaining to our doleful condition as have been better told in many other narratives of the kind than I can be expected to tell them. I will only note, in so many passing words, that day after day and night after night, we received the sea upon our backs to prevent it from swamping the boat; that one party was always kept baling, and that every hat and cap among us soon got worn out, though patched up fifty times, as the only vessels we had for that service; that another party lay down in the bottom of the boat, while a third rowed; and that we were soon all in boils and blisters and rags.

The other boat was a source of such anxious interest to all of us that I used to wonder whether, if we were saved, the time could ever come when the survivors in this boat of ours could be at all indifferent to the fortunes of the survivors in that. We got out a tow-rope whenever the weather permitted, but that did not often happen, and how we two parties kept within the same horizon, as we did, He, who mercifully permitted it to be so for our consolation, only knows. I never shall forget the looks with which, when the morning light came, we used to gaze about us over the stormy waters, for the other boat. We once parted company for seventy-two hours, and we believed them to have gone down, as they did us. The joy on both sides when we came within view of one another again, had something in a manner Divine in it; each was so forgetful of individual suffering, in tears of delight and sympathy for the people in the other boat.

I have been wanting to get round to the individual or personal part of my subject, as I call it, and the foregoing incident puts me in the right way. The patience and good disposition aboard of us, was wonderful. I was not surprised by it in the women; for, all men born of women know what great qualities they will show when men will fail; but, I own I was a little surprised by it in some of the men. Among one-and-thirty people assembled at the best of times, there will usually, I should say, be two or three uncertain tempers. I knew that I had more than one rough temper with me among my own people, for I had chosen those for the Long-boat that I might have them under my eye. But, they softened under their misery, and were as considerate of the child, as the best among us, or among men—they could not have been more so. I heard scarcely any complaining. The party lying down would moan a good deal in their sleep, and I would often notice a man—not always the same man, it is to be understood, but nearly all of them at one time or other—sitting moaning at his oar, or in his place, as he looked mistily over the sea. When it happened to be long before I could catch his eye, he would go on moaning all the time in the dismallest manner; but, when our looks met, he would brighten and leave off. I almost always got the impression that he did not know what sound he had been making, but that he thought he had been humming a tune.

Our sufferings from cold and wet were far greater than our sufferings from hunger. We managed to keep the child warm; but, I doubt if any one else among us ever was warm for five minutes together; and the shivering, and the chattering of teeth, were sad to hear. The child cried a little at first for her lost playfellow, The Golden Mary; but hardly ever whimpered afterwards; and when the state of the weather made it possible, she used now and then to be held up in the arms of some of us, to look over the sea for John Steadiman's boat. I see the golden hair and the innocent face now, between me and the driving clouds, like an Angel going to fly away.

It had happened on the second day, towards night, that Mrs. Atherfield, in getting Little Lucy to sleep, sang her a song. She had a soft, melodious voice, and, when she had finished it, our people up and begged for another. She sang them another, and after it had fallen dark ended with the Evening Hymn. From that time, whenever anything could be heard above the sea and wind, and while she had any voice left, nothing would serve the people but that she should sing at sunset. She always did, and always ended with the Evening Hymn. We mostly took up the last line, and shed tears when it was done, but not miserably. We had a prayer night and morning, also, when the weather allowed of it.

Twelve nights and eleven days we had been driving in the boat, when old Mr. Rarx began to be delirious, and to cry out to me to throw the gold overboard or it would sink us, and we should all be lost. For days past the child had been declining, and that was the great cause of his wildness. He had been over and over again shrieking out to me to give her all the remaining meat, to give her all the remaining rum, to save her at any cost, or we should all be ruined. At this time, she lay in her mother's arms at my feet. One of her little hands was almost always creeping about her mother's neck or chin. I had watched the wasting of the little hand, and I knew it was nearly over.

The old man's cries were so discordant with the mother's love and submission, that I called out to him in an angry voice, unless he held his peace on the instant, I would order him to be knocked on the head and thrown overboard. He was mute then, until the child died, very peacefully, an hour afterwards: which was known to all in the boat by the mother's breaking out into lamentations

for the first time since the wreck—for, she had great fortitude and constancy, though she was a little gentle woman. Old Mr. Rarx then became quite ungovernable, tearing what rags he had on him, raging in imprecations, and calling to me that if I had thrown the gold overboard (always the gold with him!) I might have saved the child, "And now," says he, in a terrible voice, "we shall founder, and all go to the Devil, for our sins will sink us, when we have no innocent child to bear us up!" We so discovered with amazement, that this old wretch had only cared for the life of the pretty little creature dear to all of us, because of the influence he superstitiously hoped she might have in preserving him! Altogether it was too much for the smith or armourer, who was sitting next the old man, to bear. He took him by the throat and rolled him under the thwarts, where he lay still enough for hours afterwards.

All that thirteenth night, Miss Coleshaw, lying across my knees as I kept the helm, comforted and supported the poor mother. Her child, covered with a pea-jacket of mine, lay in her lap. It troubled me all night to think that there was no Prayer-Book among us, and that I could remember but very few of the exact words of the burial service. When I stood up at broad day, all knew what was going to be done, and I noticed that my poor fellows made the motion of uncovering their heads, though their heads had been stark bare to the sky and sea for many a weary hour. There was a long heavy swell on, but otherwise it was a fair morning, and there were broad fields of sunlight on the waves in the east. I said no more than this. "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord. He raised the daughter of Jairus the ruler, and said she was not dead but slept. He raised the widow's son. He arose himself, and was seen of many. He loved little children, saying Suffer them to come unto me and rebuke them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. In His name, my friends, and committed to His merciful goodness!" With those words I laid my rough face softly on the placid little forehead, and buried the Golden Lucy in the grave of the Golden Mary.

Having had it on my mind to relate the end of this dear little child, I have omitted something from its exact place, which I will supply here. It will come quite as well here as anywhere else.

Foreseeing that if the boat lived through the stormy weather, the time must come, and soon come, when we should have absolutely no morsel to eat, I had one momentous point often in my thoughts. Although I had, years before that, fully satisfied myself that the instances in which human beings in the last distress have fed upon each other, are exceedingly few, and have very seldom indeed (if ever) occurred when the people in distress, however dreadful their extremity, have been accustomed to moderate forbearance and restraint—I say, though I had, long before, quite satisfied my mind on this topic, I felt doubtful whether there might not have been in former cases some harm and danger from keeping it out of sight and pretending not to think of it. I felt doubtful whether some minds, growing weak with fasting and exposure, and having such a terrific idea to dwell upon in secret, might not magnify it until it got to have an awful attraction about it. This was not a new thought of mine, for it had grown out of my reading. However, it came over me stronger than it had ever done before—as it had reason for doing—in the boat, and on the fourth day I decided that I would bring out into the light that unformed fear which must have been more or less darkly in every brain among us. Therefore, as a means of beguiling the time and inspiring hope, I gave them the best summary in my power of Bligh's voyage of more than three thousand miles, in an open boat, after the Mutiny of the Bounty, and of the wonderful preservation of that boat's crew. They listened throughout with great interest, and I concluded by telling them, that, in my opinion, the happiest circumstance in the whole narrative was, that Bligh, who was no delicate man either, had solemnly placed it on record therein that he was sure and certain that under no conceivable circumstances whatever, would that emaciated party who had gone through all the pains of famine, have preyed on one another. I cannot describe the visible relief which this spread through the boat, and how the tears stood in every eye. From that time I was as well convinced as Bligh himself that there was no danger, and that this phantom, at any rate, did not haunt us.

Now, it was a part of Bligh's experience that when the people in his boat were most cast down, nothing did them so much good as hearing a story told by one of their number. When I mentioned that, I saw that it struck the general attention as much as it did my own, for I had not thought of it until I came to it in my summary. This was on the day after Mrs. Atherfield first sang to us. I proposed that whenever the weather would permit, we should have a story two hours after dinner (I always issued the allowance I have mentioned, at one o'clock and called it by that name), as well as our song at sunset. The proposal was received with a cheerful satisfaction that warmed my heart within me, and I do not say too much when I say that those two periods in the four-and-twenty hours were expected with positive pleasure, and were really enjoyed, by all hands. Spectres as we soon were in our bodily wasting, our imaginations did not perish like the gross flesh upon our bones. Music and Adventure, two of the great gifts of Provi-

dence to mankind, could charm us long after that was lost.

The wind was almost always against us after the second day; and for many days together we could not nearly hold our own. We had all varieties of bad weather. We had rain, hail, snow, wind, mist, thunder and lightning. Still the boats lived through the heavy seas, and still we perishing people rose and fell with the great waves.

Sixteen nights and fifteen days, twenty nights and nineteen days, twenty-four nights and twenty-three days. So the time went on. Disheartening as I knew that our progress, or want of progress, must be, I never deceived them as to my calculations of it. In the first place, I felt that we were all too near eternity for deceit; in the second place, I knew that if I failed, or died, the man who followed me must have a knowledge of the true state of things to begin upon. When I told them at noon, what I reckoned we had made or lost, they generally received what I said, in a tranquil and resigned manner, and always gratefully towards me. It was not unusual at any time of the day for some one to burst out weeping loudly without any new cause, and, when the burst was over, to calm down a little better than before. I had seen exactly the same thing in a house of mourning.

During the whole of this time, old Mr. Rarx had had his fits of calling out to me to throw the gold (always the gold!) overboard, and of heaping violent reproaches upon me for not having saved the child; but, now, the food being all gone, and I having nothing left to serve out but a bit of coffee-berry now and then, he began to be too weak to do this, and consequently fell silent. Mrs. Atherfield and Miss Coleshaw generally lay, each with an arm across one of my knees, and her head upon it. They never complained at all. Up to the time of her child's death, Mrs. Atherfield had bound up her own beautiful hair every day; and I took particular notice that this was always before she sang her song at night, when every one looked at her. But, she never did it after the loss of her darling; and it would have been now all tangled with dirt and wet, but that Miss Coleshaw was careful of it long after she was herself, and would sometimes smooth it down with her weak thin hands.

We were past mustering a story now; but, one day, at about this period, I reverted to the superstition of old Mr. Rarx, concerning the Golden Lucy, and told them that nothing vanished from the eye of God, though much might pass away from the eyes of men. "We were all of us," says I, "children once; and our baby feet have strolled in green woods ashore; and our baby hands have gathered flowers in gardens, where the birds were singing. The children that we were, are not lost to the great knowledge of our Creator. Those innocent creatures will appear with us before Him, and plead for us. What we were in the best time of our generous youth will arise and go with us too. The purest part of our lives will not desert us at the pass to which all of us here present are gliding. What we were then, will be as much in existence before Him, as what we are now." They were no less comforted by this consideration, than I was myself; and Miss Coleshaw, drawing my ear nearer to her lips, said, "Captain Ravender, I was on my way to marry a disgraced and broken man, whom I dearly loved when he was honorable and good. Your words seem to have come out of my own poor heart." She pressed my hand upon it, smiling.

Twenty-seven nights and twenty-six days. We were in no want of rain-water, but we had nothing else. And yet, even now, I never turned my eyes upon a waking face but it tried to brighten before mine. O! what a thing it is, in a time of danger, and in the presence of death, the shining of a face upon a face! I have heard it broached that orders should be given in great new ships by electric telegraph. I admire machinery as much as any man, and am as thankful to it as any man can be for what it does for us. But, it will never be a substitute for the face of a man, with his soul in it, encouraging another man to be brave and true. Never try it for that. It will break down like a straw.

I now began to remark certain changes in myself which I did not like. They caused me much disquiet. I often saw the Golden Lucy in the air above the boat. I often saw her I have spoken of before, sitting beside me. I saw the Golden Mary go down as she really had gone down, twenty times in a day. And yet the sea was mostly, to my thinking, not sea neither, but moving country and extraordinary mountainous regions, the like of which have never been beheld. I felt it time to leave my last words regarding John Steadiman, in case any lips should last out to repeat them to any living ears. I said that John had told me (as he had on deck) that he had sung out "Breakers ahead!" the instant they were audible, and had tried to wear ship, but she struck before it could be done. (His cry, I dare say, had made my dream.) I said that the circumstances were altogether without warning and out of any course that could have been guarded against; that the same loss would have happened if I had been in charge; and that John was not to blame, but from first to last had done his duty nobly, like the man he was. I tried to write it down in my pocket-book, but could make no words, though I knew what the words were that I wanted to make. When it had come to that, her hands—though she was dead so long—laid me down gently in the bottom of the boat, and she and the Golden Lucy swung me to sleep.

All that follows, was written by John Steadiman, Chief Mate:

On the twenty-sixth day after the foundering of the Golden Mary at sea, I, John Steadiman, was sitting in my place in the stern-sheets of the Surf-boat, with just sense enough left in me to steer—that is to say, with my eyes strained, wide-awake, over the bows of the boat, and my brains fast asleep and dreaming—when I was roused upon a sudden by our second mate, Mr. William Rames.

"Let me take a spell in your place," says he. "And look you out for the Long-boat, astern. The last time she rose on the crest of a wave, I thought I made out a signal flying aboard her."

We shifted our places, clumsily and slowly enough, for we were both of us weak and dazed with wet, cold, and hunger. I waited some time, watching the heavy rollers astern, before the Long-boat rose a-top of one of them at the same time with us. At last, she was heaved up for a moment well in view, and there, sure enough, was the signal flying aboard of her—a strip of rag of some sort, rigged to an oar, and hoisted in her bows.

"What does it mean?" says Rames to me in a quavering, trembling sort of voice. Do they signal a sail in sight?"

"Hush, for God's sake!" says I, clapping my hand over his mouth. "Don't let the people hear you. They'll all go mad together if we mislead them about that signal. Wait a bit, till I have another look at it."

I held on by him, for he had set me all of a tremble with his notion of a sail in sight, and watched for the Long-boat again. Up she rose on the top of another roller. I made out the signal clearly, that second time, and saw that it was rigged half-mast high.

"Rames," says I, "it's a signal of distress. Pass the word forward to keep her before the sea, and no more. We must get the Long-boat within hailing distance of us, as soon as possible."

I dropped down into my old place at the tiller without another word—for the thought went through me like a knife that something had happened to Captain Ravender. I should consider myself unworthy to write another line of this statement, if I had not made up my mind to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—and I must, therefore, confess plainly that now, for the first time, my heart sank within me. This weakness on my part was produced in some degree, as I take it, by the exhausting effects of previous anxiety and grief.

Our provisions—if I may give that name to what we had left—were reduced to the rind of one lemon and about a couple of handsfull of coffee-berries. Besides these great distresses, caused by the death, the danger, and the suffering among my crew and passengers, I had had a little distress of my own to shake me still more, in the death of the child whom I had got to be very fond of on the voyage out—so fond that I was secretly a little jealous of her being taken in the Long-boat instead of mine when the ship foundered. It used to be a great comfort to me, and I think to those with me also, after we had seen the last of the Golden Mary, to see the Golden Lucy, held up by the men in the Long-boat, when the weather allowed it, as the best and brightest sight they had to show. She looked, at the distance we saw her from, almost like a little white bird in the air. To miss her for the first time, when the weather lulled a little again, and we all looked out for our white bird and looked in vain, was a sore disappointment. To see the men's heads bowed down and the captain's hand pointing into the sea when we hailed the Long-boat, a few days after, gave me as heavy a shock and as sharp a pang of heartache to bear as ever I remember suffering in all my life. I only mention these things to show that if I did give way a little at first, under the dread that our captain was lost to us, it was not without having been a good deal shaken beforehand by more trials of one sort or another than often fall to one man's share.

I had got over the choking in my throat with the help of a drop of water, and had steadied my mind again so as to be prepared against the worst, when I heard the hail (Lord help the poor fellows, how weak it sounded!)—

"Surf-boat, ahoy!"

I looked up, and there were our companions in misfortune tossing abreast of us; not so near that we could make out the features of any of them, but near enough, with some exertion for people in our condition, to make their voices heard in the intervals when the wind was weakest.

I answered the hail, and waited a bit, and heard nothing, and then sung out the captain's name. The voice that replied did not sound like his; the words that reached us were:

"Chief-mate wanted on board!"

Every man of my crew knew what that meant as well as I did. As second officer in command, there could be but one reason for wanting me on board the Long-boat. A groan went all round us, and my men looked darkly in each other's faces, and whispered under their breaths:

"The captain is dead!"

I commanded them to be silent, and not to make too sure of bad news, at such a pass as things had now come to with us. Then, hailing the Long-boat, I signified that I was ready to go on board when the weather would let me—stopped a bit to draw a good long breath—and then called out as loud as I could the dreadful question—

"Is the captain dead?"

The black figures of three or four men in

the after-part of she Long-boat all stooped down together as my voice reached them. They were lost to view for about a minute; then appeared again—one man among them was held up on his feet by the rest, and he hailed back the blessed words (a very faint hope went a very long way with people in our desperate situation):

"Not yet!"

The relief felt by me, and by all with me, when we knew that our captain, though unfitted for duty, was not lost to us, it is not in words—at least, not in such words as a man like me can command—to express. I did my best to cheer the men by telling them what a good sign it was that we were not as badly off yet as we had feared; and then communicated what instructions I had to give, to William Rames, who was to be left in command in my place when I took charge of the Long-boat. After that, there was nothing to be done, but to wait for the chance of the wind dropping at sunset, and the sea going down afterwards, so as to enable our weak crews to lay the two boats alongside of each other, without undue risk—or, to put it plainer, without saddling ourselves with the necessity for any extraordinary exertion of strength or skill. Both the one and the other had now been starved out of us for days and days together.

At sunset the wind suddenly dropped, but the sea, which had been running high for so long a time past, took hours after that before it showed any signs of getting to rest. The moon was shining, the sky was wonderfully clear, and it could not have been, according to my calculations, far off midnight, when the long, slow, regular swell of the calming ocean fairly set in, and I took the responsibility of lessening the distance between the Long-boat and ourselves.

It was, I dare say, a delusion of mine; but I thought I had never seen the moon shine so white and ghastly anywhere, either at sea or on land, as she shone that night while we were approaching our companions in misery. When there was not much more than a boat's length between us, and the white light streamed cold and clear over all our faces, both crews rested on their oars with one great shudder, and stared over the gunwale of either boat, panic-stricken at the first sight of each other.

"Any lives lost among you?" I asked, in the midst of that frightful silence.

The men in the Long-boat, huddled together like sheep at the sound of my voice.

"None yet, but the child, thanks be to God!" answered one among them.

And at the sound of his voice, all my men shrank together like the men in the Long-boat. I was afraid to let the horror produced by our first meeting at close quarters after the dreadful changes that wet, cold, and famine had produced, last one moment longer than could be helped; so, without giving time for any more questions and answers, I commanded the men to lay the two boats close alongside of each other. When I rose up and committed the tiller to the hands of Rames, all my poor fellows raised their white faces imploringly to mine. "Don't leave us, sir," they said, "don't leave us." "I leave you," says I, "under the command and the guidance of Mr. William Rames, as good a sailor as I am, and as trusty and kind a man as ever stepped. Do your duty by him, as you have done it by me; and, remember, to the last, that while there is life there is hope. God bless and help you all!" With those words, I collected what strength I had left, caught at two arms that were held out to me, and so got from the stern-sheets of one boat into the stern-sheets of the other.

"Mind where you step, sir," whispered one of the men who had helped me into the Long-boat. I looked down as he spoke. Three figures were huddled up below me, with the moonshine falling on them in ragged streaks through the gaps between the men standing or sitting above them. The first face I made out was the face of Miss Coleshaw, her eyes were wide open, and fixed on me. She seemed still to keep her senses, and, by the alternate parting and closing of her lips, to be trying to speak, but I could not hear that she uttered a single word. On her shoulder rested the head of Mrs. Atherfield. The mother of our poor little Golden Lucy must, I think, have been dreaming of the child she had lost; for there was a faint smile just ruffling the white stillness of her face, when I first saw it turned upward, with peaceful closed eyes towards the heavens. From her, I looked down a little, and there, with his head on her lap, and with one of her hands resting tenderly on his cheek—there lay the Captain, to whose help and guidance, up to this miserable time, we had never looked in vain,—there, worn out at last in our service, and for our sakes, lay the best and bravest man of all our company. I stole my hand in gently through his clothes and laid it on his heart, and felt a little feeble warmth over it, though my cold, dulled, touch could not detect even the faintest beating. The two men in the stern-sheets with me, noticing what I was doing—knowing I loved him like a brother—and seeing, I suppose, more distress in my face than I myself was conscious of its showing, lost command over themselves altogether, and burst into a piteous moaning, sobbing lamentation over him. One of the two drew aside a jacket from his feet, and showed me that they were bare, except where a wet, ragged strip of stocking still clung to one of them. When the ship struck the Iceberg, he had run on deck, leaving his shoes in his cabin. All through the voyage in the boat his feet had been unprotected; and not a soul had discovered it until he dropped! As long as he could keep his eyes open, the

very look of them had cheered the men, and comforted and upheld the women. Not one living creature in the boat, with any sense about him, but had felt the good influence of that brave man in one way or another. Not one but had heard him, over and over again, give the credit to others which was due only to himself; praising this man for patience, and thanking that man for help, when the patience and the help had really and truly, as to the best part of both, come only from him. All this, and much more, I heard pouring confusedly from the men's lips while they crouched down, sobbing and crying over their commander, and wrapping the jacket as warmly and tenderly as they could over his cold feet. It went to my heart to check them; but I knew that if this lamenting spirit spread any further, all chance of keeping alight any last sparks of hope and resolution among the boat's company would be lost for ever. Accordingly I sent them to their places, spoke a few encouraging words to the men forward, promising to serve out, when the morning came, as much as I dared of any eatable thing left in the lockers; called to Rames, in my old boat, to keep as near us as he safely could; drew the garments and coverings of the two poor suffering women more closely about them; and, with a secret prayer to be directed for the best in bearing the awful responsibility now laid on my shoulders, took my Captain's vacant place at the helm of the Long-boat.

This, as well as I can tell it, is the full and true account of how I came to be placed in charge of the lost passengers and crew of The Golden Mary, on the morning of the twenty-seventh day after the ship struck the Iceberg, and foundered at sea.

Before I go on to relate what happened after the two boats were under my command, I will stop a little here, for the purpose of adding some pages of writing to the present narrative, without which it would not be, in my humble estimation, complete. I allude to some little record of the means by which —before famine and suffering dulled our ears and silenced our tongues—we shortened the weary hours, and helped each other to forget, for a while, the dangers that encompassed us. The stories to which Captain Ravender has referred, as having been related by the people in his boat, were matched by other stories, related by the people in my boat; and, in both cases, as I well know, the good effect of our following, in this matter, the example of Bligh and his men, when they were adrift like us, was of unspeakable importance in keeping up our spirits, and, by consequence, in giving us the courage which was necessary, under Providence, to the preservation of our lives. I shall therefore ask permission, before proceeding to the account of our Deliverance, to reproduce in this place three or four of the most noteworthy of the stories which circulated among us. Some, I give from my remembrance; some, which I did not hear, from the remembrance of others.

THE BEGUILEMENT IN THE BOATS.

I come from Ashbrooke. (It was the Armourer who spun this yarn.) Dear me! how many years back is that? Twenty years ago it must be now—long before I ever thought of going to sea—before I let rambling notions get into my head—when I used to walk up the street singing, and thinking of the time when I should come to have a forge of my own.

It was a pretty sight to look down Ashbrooke, especially on a fine summer's day, when the sun was out. Why, I've been told painters would come from miles off, purposely to put it down on paper, and you'd see them at turnings of the road, and under trees working away like bees. And no wonder; for I have seen pictures enough in my day, but none to go near that. I've often wished I could handle a brush like some of those people—just enough, you know, to make a little picture of it for myself, to bring about with me, and hang up over my hammock. For that matter, I am looking at it this moment, standing, as it might be, at the corner of the road, looking down the slope. There was the old church, just here on the right, with a slanting roof running to the ground, almost. You might walk round it for a month and not see a bare stone, the moss grew so thick all over it. It was very pleasant of Sundays, standing by and seeing the village folk trooping out of the porch, and hearing the organ-music playing away inside! Then, going down the hill, a little further on, you met queer, old-fashioned houses, with great shingle roofs. Beyond that, again, was a puzzling bit of building, like the half of a church-window, standing up quite stiff by itself. They used to say there had once been an abbey or nunnery in these parts, full of clergymen and clergywomen, in the old papist times, of course; and there were little bits of it sticking up all over the place. Then more old houses (How the moss did grow, to be sure!), until you passed by the Joyful Heart Inn, where every traveller pulled up to refresh himself and his nag. Many is the pleasant hour I've spent in the Joyful Heart, sitting in the cool porch with the ivy hanging down overhead, or by the great fireplace in the sanded kitchen.

There was a sort of open place in front of the Joyful Heart, with a market-cross in the middle, and a spring where the young women used to come for water, and stand talking there, telling each other the news. The painters used to put them down too—spring and all; and I don't wonder at their fancying them. For, when I was sitting that way in the porch, looking out at them, the red petticoats, and the queer jars, and the old cross, and the sun going down behind, made a kind of picture very pretty to look at. I've seen the same of it many a time in some of those places about the Spanish main, when the foreign women stood round about and carried their jars in the same fashion. Only there was no Joyful Heart. I always missed the Joyful Heart in such places. Neither was there the Great Forge just over the way, facing the Joyful Heart. I must put in a word here about the Forge, though I have been a long time coming round to the point.

I never saw such a forge as that—never! It must have been another bit of the old Abbey—the great gate, most likely, for it was nothing but a huge, wide, archway. Very handsomely worked, though, and covered with moss like the rest. There was a little stone hutch at the top, that looked like a belfry. The bell was gone long ago, of course, but the rings were there, and the stauncheons, all soundly made—good work as I could have turned out myself. Some one had run up a bit of building at the back, which kept out the wind and made all snug, and there you had as handsome a forge as I ever came across.

It was kept by a young man of the name of Whichelo—Will Whichelo. But he had another name besides that, and I think a better one. If you were to go asking through the village for one Will Whichelo, why, you would come back about as wise as you went; unless, indeed, you chanced upon the minister or the schoolmaster. No; but because he was always seen hard at his work, swinging his hammer with good-will, and stepping back at every stroke to get a better sweep—because he laid his whole soul to the business—the Ashbrooke folk christened him Ding Dong Will. He was always singing and at his work. Many a nice young woman of the village would have been glad if Ding Dong Will had looked her way. But he never took heed of any of them, or was more than civil and gentle with them.

"Look ye," he would say, leaning on his great hammer, "are they the creatures for handling cold iron, or lifting the sledge? No, no!" and would take up his favourite stave of Hammer and anvil! hammer and anvil! lads, yoho!

I was but a youngster at that time, but had a great hankering after the iron business. I would be nothing else, I told my father, who wanted to send me up to London to learn accounts. I was always dropping down there, and would stay half the day, leaning against the arch and watching the forging. Coming along of a night, I used to get quite cheerful when I saw the blaze of the furnace, and the chinking of the iron was the finest music for me I ever heard—finer than the organ tunes even. Sometimes a dusty rider would come galloping in, and pull up sharp at the Forge; he had cast a shoe on the road, and Ding Dong Will would come out and take the horse's measure. Then the village folk would get standing round, in twos and threes, all of them eyeing over the horse and the rider, too. Then he would get upon his nag once more, and the little crowd would open, and he ride away harder than he came, Ding Dong Will, with his hammer over his shoulder, looking after him till he got to the turn of the hill.

At last, my father came round and gave up making me a clerk—it would never have done—and Ding Dong Will, who had a liking for me, agreed to take me at the Forge. I soon got to use the big sledge fairly enough—nothing, of course, to Ding Dong Will; and so we worked away from morning till night, like two Jolly Millers. There was fine music at the Forge, when the two of us were at it.

Ding Dong Will never went to the Joyful Heart; he said he had no time to be idle; but I went pretty often—that is, when the day was done and work over—just to have a talk in the cool porch, and hear what company was in the house. For, Miss Arthur—Mary Arthur—she that used to sit in the parlour and manage the house, was never very stand-off to me. But she had a reason of her own for that, as you will see. She was niece to old Joe Fenton, the landlord, who brought her down from London to keep things going. In short, she was as good as mistress there. Folks said she kept her head a little high; but, to say truth, I never found her so. She had had her schooling up in London, and had learned manners with the best of them, so it was but nature she should be a stroke above the girls of the place. That was why they didn't like her. About her looks? Ah! she was a beauty! Such hair—it went nigh down to her feet—and her eyes—why they shot fire like a pair of stars—and she had a way of shifting them back and forward, and taking your measure at every look, that made you feel quite uneasy. All the young fellows were by the ears about her, but she never heeded or encouraged them; unless it might be that she had a leaning to one—and that was to Ding Dong Will opposite. No one thought of such a thing, she kept it so close; but she might as well have had a leaning to a lump of cold iron.

The way I came to suspect it was this. The old Forge, as I said, was just fronting the Joyful Heart; and, every morning, as sure

as I came down to work, I used to see her sitting in the bow-window, behind the white curtain, working with her needle. There she would be all the morning, for at that time there was nothing doing down-stairs, and, every now and again, she would be taking a sly look over at the Forge where Ding Dong Will was swinging his great sledge, and trolling his Hammer and anvil! lads, yoho! He was well worth looking out at, was Ding Dong Will. I used to tell him, "Mary Arthur is making eyes at you yonder—have a care, Will." And he would laugh loud, and say, "She may find better sport elsewhere. No sweethearts for me, lad. Hand the file. Sing Hammer and anvil, yoho!"

I never saw so insensible a fellow, never. But her liking slipped out in more ways than that. Whenever I went in, she was always taking notice of me, and asking about myself. How was I getting on at the Forge? Did I like the business? Did we do much? What kind was he, the other—he with the curious name? Then she would laugh, and show her white teeth.

At last, one Saturday evening I was sitting in the porch, looking at the children playing in the road, when I heard a step at the back, and there was Mary Arthur standing behind me. "Resting after the week?" she said.

"Yes, and a hard week we've had of it."

"Nothing doing at the Forge now, I suppose," says she. (He had gone down to the green with the young fellows to throw the bar.)

"No," says I; "we've let the fire out, and will rest till Monday."

She stayed silent for a minute, and then —"Why does he—Whichelo I mean—keep shut up that way at home?" She was beating her hands impatiently together. "What does it all mean? What do you make of it?"

I stared, you may be sure, she spoke so sharply.

"Does he never go out and see the world—go to dances or merry-makings?"

"No," said I; "never."

"Well," said she, "isn't it odd; how do you account for it?"

"Well, it is odd," I said.

"And he so young?"

All this while she was shifting her black eyes in a restless kind of way.

"You should try," says she, "and get him to mix more with the others, for your own sake as well as his."

I was going to tell her I was at him morning, noon, and night, when the bell rang, and she tripped off.

Ding Dong Will came into the Forge that night, fairly tired and done up. "Beat them as usual!" he said, as he flung himself down on the bench.

"I knew you would," I said.

"But it was thirsty work: some drink, for Heaven's sake!"

"There's not a drop of malt in the house," I said.

"Well, go over and fetch some."

Said I, "Go yourself. I tell you what, there's a nice girl there always talking of you; and, if you've anything of a man about you, you'll go over and speak her softly, and show her you're not what she takes you for. Now, there's my mind for you, Ding Dong Will."

"Stuff," says he, laughing; "let her mind her own business, and leave me to my anvil. I'll not go."

"Ah! you're afraid," said I—"that's it!"

"Afraid," says he, starting up; "you know I'm not—you know I'm not. Here, I'll go," and made straight for the door. "Stop," he said, turning round, "what did she say about taking me for a different sort of man?"

"No matter now," said I. "When you come back."

It should have been a five minutes' job, that fetching the malt. But, would you believe it? he was close upon an hour about it. I knew well she had not been losing her time. When he came in, I began at once at him: "Ah, ah!" said I, "didn't I tell you? I knew it!"

"Nonsense," said he, with a foolish kind of laugh, "it was none of my fault. She kept me there with her talk, and I couldn't get away."

"O, poor Ding Dong Will," I said, "You had better have stayed away, after all!"

"Folly!" says he, laughing more foolishly still; "you'll see if she gets me there again. Enough about her. There!"

I saw he was uneasy in his mind, and so gave him no more trouble. But I needn't have been so delicate with him at all, for next day it was quite the other way. He never gave me peace or rest, sounding me and picking out of me what she had said of him. The man was clean gone from that hour. It's always the way with those kind of men: when they are touched, they run off like a bit of melted metal.

He got worse every day from that out. He was in and out of the Joyful Heart half his time, always on some excuse or other, and going lazily to his work, stopping every now and again to have a look at the white curtain over the way. It was a poor thing to see him—it was indeed; I was ashamed of him. At last he came to doing nothing at all, or next to nothing; and the great hammer was laid by in a corner.

Well, this went on, it might be for a month, and folks in the village began to talk and wink, and say, what would come next, now that Ding Dong Will was caught at last. I tried to keep things going as well as I could, but it was of very little use. The business fell off; and I never will forget the sinking feel I got when the riders began to go straight on through the village—past the old Forge—

and pull up at a new place, lately opened, beyond the church! After all they only did what was natural, and went where they would be best attended to. By-and-by I saw a change coming on Ding Dong Will—a very odd change. With all his foolishness, he had been in great spirits—always laughing—without much meaning to be sure; but, still as I say, in great spirits. But now, I saw that he was turning quite another way, getting quite a down-hearted, moping kind of manner, I couldn't well make out. He would come in of an evening—very rough and sulky—and sit down before the fire looking into the coals, and never open his mouth for hours at a time. Then he would get up and walk up and down, stamping and muttering—nothing very holy, you may be sure. I soon guessed—indeed, I heard as much in the village—that she was drawing off a bit—or else trying her play-acting upon him, for she was full of those kind of tricks. She was a very deep one, that Mary Arthur, and it was a pity she ever came into the place. She had a kind of up-and-down way of treating him—one time being all smiles and pleasantness, and next day like a lump of ice,—pretending not to see him when he came in. She made him know his place—rolling her black eyes back and forward in every direction but his; then he would come home raging and swearing. I often wondered what she could be at, or what was at the bottom of it all; and, I believe, I would never have come at the truth if I didn't happen one day to run up against a handsome-looking gentleman in a fisherman's hat, just at the door of the Joyful Heart. They told me, inside, it was young Mr. Temple, of Temple Court,—some ten miles off,—come down to stop there for the fishing.

There it was! That was the secret of all! He had been there nigh on a fortnight—had come, mind you, for two or three days' fishing; but the sport was so good he really must stay a bit longer. Quite natural—and, you may say, quite proper! I'm thinking there was better sport going on in the parlour than ever he found in the river. Her head was nigh turned with it all, and I really believe she thought she was going to be Mistress of Temple Court before long—though how a young girl that had come down to London, and had seen a bit of life, should be so short-seeing, is more than I can fancy. She took the notion into her head—that was certain—and every soul in the place could see what she was at, except the poor blind creature at the Forge; but even he had his eyes opened at last, for people now began to talk and whisper, and hope all was right up at the Joyful Heart. I heard that the minister had gone once to speak with her; but came out very red and angry. No doubt she had bidden him mind his own concerns, and not meddle with her. As to old Joe Fenton's looking after his niece, he might as well have been cut out of a block of wood.

One morning, just after breakfast, when he—Ding Dong Will—was sitting at the fire as usual, and not speaking a word, he turns round quite sharp upon me and says:

"What is that young Jack doing all this time? What do you say?"

"I'm sure I can't tell," I said, "unless it be fishing."

"Fishing!" said he, stamping down the coals with his great shoe, "like enough! I've never heard much of the fish in these waters."

"Still he does go out with a rod," I said; "there's nothing else here to amuse him, I suppose. But he goes on Monday."

"Look me in the face," says he, catching me by the wrist, "you don't believe that he's come only for that?"

"I can't tell," said I, "unless it is that he likes Mary Arthur's company. She's a nice girl!"

"Ah!" said he, "I've been thinking so some time back—the false, hollow jade! This was at the bottom of all her tricks! But I tell you what," said he, snatching his hammer, "let him look out, and not come in my way—I give him warning——"

With this he got a bit of iron upon the anvil and beat away at it like a wild man. Then he flung it down into a corner and, taking his hat, walked out with great strides. I ran after him and took him by the arm, for I was in a desperate fright lest he should do something wicked. But he put me back quietly.

"See," said he, "I give you a caution, don't meddle with me. Mind——"

I didn't try and stop him then, for he looked savage. But I followed a little behind. He made for the Joyful Heart; and, just as he came under the porch, with his head down, and never heeding where he was going to, he ran full up against somebody, who, without much more ado, gave him back his own, and flung him right against the wall.

"Now then, young Hercules!" said a gay kind of voice—I knew it for Mr. Temple's,—"now then, look before you, will you! Keep the passage clear."

I thought the other was going to run at him straight, but he stopped himself quickly.

"Who are you speaking to in that way?" said he, with a low kind of growl. "Is it your horse, or your dog, or your groom? Which? Are those manners?"

"Now, Bruin," says the young man, "no words. Let me pass,—I'm in a hurry."

"Who was it taught you," says Ding Dong Will, with the same kind of growl, and not moving an inch,—"who taught you to call folk Bruins and Herculeses—eh? I declare," says he, colouring up quite red, and trembling all over, "I've a mind to give you a lesson myself—I will, by ——"

I think he was going to spring at him this time, but I heard steps on the sanded floor,

and there was Mary Arthur standing before us. A fine creature she looked, too. She was in a tearing rage—and her eyes had more of the devilish look in them than I had ever seen before.

"For shame," she said, to Will—"for shame! What do you come here for, with your low brawling ways. Who asks you to come? Who wants you? Take him away—home—anywhere out of this!"

It was a piteous sight to look at poor Ding Dong Will, staring stupidly at her, and breathing hard, as if there was a weight on his chest.

"Mr. Temple," says she, turning to him quite changed, and with a gentle smile on her face, "can you forgive me for all this? That such a thing should have happened to you in our house! But it shall never occur again! Never—never!"

I could see he took her very easy, for he was looking out at something, and she had to say it twice over before he heard her.

"Sweet Mary," said he, "don't give yourself a moment's uneasiness about me. Let things go as they like, so that you don't put yourself out." Here he gave a kind of yawn, and went over to the window.

She looked after him, biting her lip hard.

"Why don't you take him away, as I told you?" she says at last. "What does he want here?"

I pitied him so much, to see him standing there so beaten down, that I could not help putting in my word.

"Well, I must say, Miss Mary, poor Ding Dong Will didn't deserve this,—from you, of all people."

"Hallo!" says Mr. Temple, coming back; "is this famous Ding Dong Will from over the way?"

"No other, sir," says I.

"Here, Ding Dong Will," says he, putting out his hand, "we musn't fall out. If I had known it was you, you should have had the passage all to yourself. You're a fine fellow, Will, and I've often admired the way you swung the great hammer."

She was biting her lips still harder than before, but said nothing.

"Stop," said he, "I have a great idea. So this is Ding Dong Will! Whisper a minute, Mary."

He did whisper something to her, and you never saw what a change it made in her. She turned all scarlet, and gave him such a wicked devilish look.

"This is some joke," said she, at last.

"Not a bit of it," says he, laughing; "not a bit of it. Ah! You see I know what goes on in the village!"

"I couldn't believe that you mean such a thing!" says she, getting white again.

"Stuff!" said he, very impatiently. "I tell you, I am in earnest. Listen, Ding Dong Will. I must be off to London to-morrow,—the ladies there are dying to see me, so go I must. Now, I know there has been something on between you two,—don't tell me, I know all about it. So now, friend Ding Dong, show yourself a man of spirit, and settle it sharp. And I promise you, I'll come down myself to give the bride away, and start you both comfortably."

It was well for him he was looking the other way, and didn't see the infernal look she gave him out of those eyes of hers. I think if there had been a knife convenient, she would have plunged it into him at that minute. But she covered it all with a kind of forced laugh, and said she wasn't quite ready to be disposed of so quickly, and then made some excuse to run up-stairs. Mr. Temple then yawned again, and went over to the window, and wondered would it be a fine night, as he had to dine out. Neither of us spoke to him, for he was an unfeeling fellow with all his generous offers. So we left him there, and I brought back Ding Dong Will to the Forge again.

About four o'clock that same day (it was almost dark at that hour), when I was coming home from buying something in the village, I thought I saw him crossing over to the Joyful Heart; and as I passed the porch, I swear I saw the two of them (Mary Arthur and he) talking in the passage—there was no mistake about it—and she talking very eagerly. Presently, she drew him into the parlour, and shut the door. What could bring him there now, after the morning's business? Well, I thought, he is a poor-spirited creature, after all—a true spaniel! He didn't come in, I suppose for an hour after that, and then in a wild sort of humour, as if he had been drinking. But what do you think of his denying that he had been near the Joyful Heart at all, or that he had seen her? Denied it flat! And then, when I pressed him on it, and asked if I wasn't to trust my own eyes, he began to show his teeth, and get savage. I was only a youngster then, and so had to put up with his humours; but I determined to leave him on the first convenient excuse. Dear! how that man was changed in a short time!

On this night he took a fancy that we should go to bed early. He was tired, he said, and wanted rest after the day's trouble, and his heart was heavy. So I gave in to him at once, and we were soon snug in our little cots on each side of the hearth: we used to sleep of nights in a queer kind of place just off the forge, all vaulted over, with arches crossing one another and meeting, in a kind of carved bunch in the middle. This might have been the clergymen's pantry, or wine vaults, may be, in the old times. Whatever use they had for it, it was a very snug place. I recollect there were all sorts of queer faces with horns and hoods, all carved out in the bunch; and I often lay awake at nights looking at them, and studying them, and thinking why they were grinning and

winking at me in that way. I remember one creature that always aimed straight at you with his tail pointed, holding it like a gun.

It might have been about nine o'clock, or perhaps half-past eight, when we turned in. I know I heard the old church clock chiming pleasantly as we lay down. After watching the fire flashing up and down, and taking a look at the funny faces in the bunch overhead, I soon went sound asleep. I woke again, before the fire was out, and looking towards Will's cot, saw that it was empty. A vague feeling of uneasiness mingled with my surprise at that discovery, and made me jump out of bed in a moment. I reflected for a little—felt more uneasy than ever—huddled on my clothes in a great hurry—and, without giving myself a moment's time for any second thoughts, went out to see what had become of Ding Dong Will.

He was not in the neighbourhood of the Forge, so I followed a steep footpath in the wood behind which led straight to the water's edge. I walked on a little, observing that the moon was out and the stars shining, and the sky of a fine frosty blue, until I came to an old tree that I knew well. I had hardly cast a first careless look at it, before I started back all in a fright, for I saw at my feet, stretched out among the leaves, a figure with a fisherman's hat beside it. I knew it to be young Mr. Temple, lying there quite dead, with his face all over blood. I thought I should have sunk down upon the earth with grief and horror, and ran farther along the little pathway as fast as I could to a place where the trees opened a little, full in the moonlight. There, I saw Ding Dong Will standing quite still and motionless, with his hammer on his shoulder, and his face covered up in his hand.

He stayed a long time that way, without ever stirring, and then began to come up, very slowly, weeping, his eyes upon the ground. I felt as if I were fixed to that one spot, and waited till he met me full face to face. What a guilty start he gave!—I thought he would have dropped.

"O, Will, Will! what have you been doing? Some terrible thing!"

"I—I—I, nothing!" he said, staggering about, and hiding his face.

"What have you done with him—Mr. Temple?" I said, still holding him. He was trembling all over like a palsied man, and fell back against a tree with a deep groan. I saw how it was then—it was as good as written in his face. So I left him there—against the tree—and all the rest of that horrible night I wandered up and down along the roads and lanes: anything sooner than be under the same roof with him. At last morning came; and, as soon as the sun rose I stole back, and, looking through the window, found that he was gone. I never like to think of that night, though it is so far back.

By noon the next day the whole town was in a fever: people talking and whispering at corners. He had been missed; but they were on his track, for it was well known that he was away among the hills hiding. They dragged the river all day; and, on that night, the body of young Mr. Temple was found; his head beaten in with a hammer.

What end Will Whichelo came to, it would not be hard to guess. But Mary Arthur—she who drove him on to it, as everybody knew—she was let away, and went up to London, where she lived to do mischief enough. The old Forge was shut up, and fell into greater ruin. For many a long day no one ventured near that part of the river walk after dark.

It was the fifth evening towards twilight, when poor Dick began to sing—in my boat, the Surf-Boat. At first nobody took any notice of him, and indeed he seemed to be singing more to himself than to any one else. I had never heard the tune before, neither have I heard it since, but it was beautiful. I don't know how it might sound now, but then, in the twilight, darkness coming down on us fast, and, for aught we knew, death in the darkness, its simple words were full of meaning. The song was of a mother and child talking together of Heaven. I saw more than one gaunt face lifted up, and there was a great sob when it was done, as if everybody had held their breath to listen. Says Dick then, "That was my cousin Amy's song, Mr. Steadiman."

"Then it will be a favourite of yours, Dick;" I replied, hazarding a guess at the state of the case.

"Yes. I don't know why I sing it. Perhaps she put it in my mind. Do you believe in those things, Mr. Steadiman?"

"In what things, Dick?" I wanted to draw him on to talk of himself, as he had no other story to tell.

"She's dead, Captain; and it seemed a little while since as if I heard her voice, far away, as it might be in England, singing it again; and when she stopped, I took it up. It must be fancy, you know, it could not really be." Before long the night fell, and when we could not see each other's faces—except by the faint starlight—it seemed as if poor Dick's heart opened, and as if he must tell us who and what he was.

Perhaps I ought to say how poor Dick came to be with us at all. About a week before we sailed, there came to Captain Ravender one morning at his inn, a man whom he had known intimately; when they two were young fellows. Said he, "Captain, there's my nephew—poor Dick Tarrant—I want to ship him off to Australia, to California, or anywhere out of the way. He does nothing but get into mischief here, and bring disgrace on the family. Where are you bound for, next voyage?" Captain Ravender replied, California. "California is a long way off," said

Captain Ravender's friend, "it will do as well as any place; he can dig for gold. The fact is, Dick has run through one fortune, and now a maiden-aunt, who considers the credit of the family, offers him three hundred pounds to leave England. He consents to go, and the best plan will be to put him under your charge, pay his passage and outfit, and leave the rest of the money in your hands to be given over to him when he lands at the diggings."

Captain Ravender agreed to the proposal, and poor Dick, who had been left standing outside the door, was called in and introduced. I came in just at that point, and saw him. He was the wreck of what had been a fine-looking young man, ten years ago, dragged down now by reckless dissipation to reckless poverty. His clothing was very shabby, his countenance wild and haggard, his shock of brown hair, rusty with neglect,—not a promising subject to look at. His uncle told him the arrangements he had made with Captain Ravender, in which he apparently acquiesced without much caring,—"North or south, east or west," said he, "it was all the same to him. If he had gone out to India, when he had a chance a dozen years before, he should have been a man or a mouse then." That was the only remark he offered. And the thing was settled.

But when the time came to sail, poor Dick was not forthcoming. We sent up to his uncle's house to know what was to be done, and, by-and-by, down he came with his nephew, who had almost given us the slip. Until we got into blue water Dick was prisoner rather than passenger. He did not take to his banishment kindly, or see, as his relatives did, that there was a chance before him of redeeming a wasted life and repairing a ruined constitution. He was a very good-humoured, easy-tempered fellow, and a great favourite aboard; and, till the time of the wreck, cheerful, except in the evening when he got to leaning over the ship's-side, and singing all kinds of sentimental love-songs. I had told the men to keep an eye on him, and they did. I was afraid he might, in one of his black moods, try to make away with himself.

He was the younger of two brothers, sons of a yeoman or gentleman-farmer in Cheshire; both whose parents died when they were quite little things, leaving them, however, for their station, amply provided for. There was two hundred pounds a-year for their bringing-up, till they were eighteen, when the sum was to be doubled, and at one-and-twenty they were to get five thousand pounds a-piece to start them in the world. Old Miss Julian Tarrant took Tom, the elder, and my friend took poor Dick. Dick was a wild lad, idle at his book, hankering after play, but as kind-hearted and handsome a fellow as you could wish to see. Dick was generally better liked than Tom, who was steady as old Time. Both brothers were sent to the grammar-school of the town, near which they lived, and one of Dick's discursive anecdotes related to the second master there, whom, he asserted, he should have had pleasure in soundly thrashing at that moment, in part payment of the severe punishment he had formerly inflicted on his idle pupil. When Dick was sixteen that tide in his affairs came, which, had he followed it out to India, would probably have led on to fortune. But Dick had an invincible tie to England. Precocious in everything, he was deeply in love with his cousin Amy, who was three years older than himself, and very beautiful; and Amy was very fond of him as of a younger brother.

Said poor Dick, with a quiver in his voice, as he was telling his story, "She was the only creature in the whole world that ever really cared whether I lived or died. I worshipped the very ground she walked on! Tom was a clever, shrewd fellow—made for getting on in the world, and never minding anybody but himself. Uncle Tarrant was as hard and rigid as a machine, and his wife was worse—there was nobody nice but Amy; she was an angel! When I got into scrapes, and spent more money than I ought, she set me right with my uncle, and later—when it was too late for any good, and the rest of them treated me like a dog—she never gave me either a cold look or a hard word. Bless her!"

For the sake of being near his cousin, Dick professed a wish to be a farmer like his cousin and father, which was quite agreeable to the family; and for three years more he stayed in his Uncle Tarrant's house, very much beloved by all—though in his bitterness he said not—for his gaiety and light-heart were like a charm about him. If there was a fault, he had friends too many, for most of them were of a kind not likely to profit a young man.

Coming home one evening, about twilight, from a hunt which he had attended, the poor lad unexpectedly met the crisis of his fate. He told us this with an exactness of detail that made the scene he described like a bit of Dutch painting. I wish I could repeat it to you in his own words, but that is impossible; still I will be as exact as possible.

In Mr. Tarrant's house there was a little parlour especially appropriated to Amy's use. It had a low window with a cushioned seat, from which one long step took you into the garden. In this parlour Amy had her piano, her book-case, her work-basket, her mother's picture on the wall, and several of poor Dick's sketches neatly framed. Dick liked this room better than any other in the house. When the difference betwixt Amy's age and his seemed greater than it did now, it was here he used to come to be helped with his lessons; and later, when his red-hot youth was secretly wreathing all manner of tender fancies about her, that he used to sit at her

feet reading to her out of some poetry-book, or singing while she worked, or, perhaps, sang, too. These pleasant early intimacies had never been discontinued, for, while Dick's heart was wasting its first passion on his cousin, she was all the while thinking of somebody else. He was a boy to her in point of age still, and this particular day ended his blissful delusions.

Having put his pony in the stable, he made his way at once to Amy's parlour, opening the door softly, for he liked to surprise her. Neither she nor the person with her heard him enter; they were too much occupied with themselves and each other to hear anything. Amy was standing in the window, and beside her, with his arm round her waist, was the straight-haired, pale-featured curate of the parish. It was a clear yellow twilight, and all about Amy's head the lustre shone like a glory; her hands were down-dropt, and the busy fingers were plucking a rose to pieces, petal by petal, and scattering them on the carpet at her feet. She was as blushing herself as the poor rose, and seemed to listen willingly to the pleadings of her lover. Dick noticed the slight quivering of her lips and the humid glitter of her eyes when the low-spoken, tremulous words, meant only for one ear, met his, and he said he felt as if all the blood in his body were driven violently up to his brain by their sound.

The bird in its cage began trilling a loud song as it pecked at a spray of green which the evening wind blew against the wires through the open window, and under cover of its noise poor Dick stole out, leaving the young lovers alone in the blush of their acknowledged love. He went back to the stable, got his pony out, mounted it, and galloped away like mad to rejoin the companions he had left an hour before for Amy's sake. It was not till after midnight that he came home, and then he was reeling drunk. His uncle Tarrant and Amy had sat up for him, and, being quarrelsome in his cups, he insulted the first, and would not speak to his cousin. Poor Dick thought to drown his sorrow, and this was the beginning of his downward course.

The individual whom Amy had chosen to endow with her love had nothing about him particular to approve except his profession. All his attributes, moral, mental, and personal, were negative rather than positive. Poor Dick described him only as Straight-haired, as if that epithet embodied all his qualities. He thought that Amy did not really love him, but was attracted by some imaginary sanctity and perfection with which her imagination invested him. It was very likely: from what we see every day we may be sure that many women have loved, not the man himself they have married, but an ideal which he personates very indifferently indeed to all eyes but theirs.

Dick could not, for many days, restrain the expression of his feelings. Coming one day suddenly on Amy in the garden where she was walking in maiden meditation, he stopped her and made her listen to his story, which he poured out with much exaggeration of epithet and manner. Amy was startled and distressed: she endeavoured in vain to stop his confession by appealing to his common sense of what was right.

"Dick, you know I am engaged to Henry Lister—you ought not to have spoken—let me go!" said she, for he had grasped her hands tightly in his.

"I ought not to have spoken, and I love you! O! cousin, you don't know what love is if you say so. Amy, it will out! Amy, if I had come before the straight-haired parson, would you have listened to me then?"

A vivid blush flew into the girl's face, but she would not say a word of encouragement; on that blush, however, poor Dick, whether rightly or wrongly, contrived to found a renewed hope. Amy kept his avowal to herself, knowing well that its discovery would entail a total separation from her cousin; and she had become so accustomed to his usefulness and gaiety in a house where everybody else was chilly and methodical, that she could not readily part with him. I incline to think myself that she did like Dick better than the straight-haired curate for many reasons, and Dick himself was persuaded of it. Her indecision had, as may be supposed, a very pernicious effect on his mind and conduct. One day he was in the seventh heaven of hope and contentment, and the next he was the most miserable dog alive: then he would go and forget his griefs in a convivial bout with his comrades, till at length his Uncle Tarrant turned him out of doors. Amy had tried her influence with him in vain.

"You are the cause of it, Amy, and nobody but you," said Dick, passionately; "if you would give that straight-haired fellow warning, you should never have to complain of me again."

But Amy, though she fretted a great deal, held to her engagement, and Dick went on from bad to worse.

It must have been very deplorable to behold the reckless way in which he dissipated his money as soon as he got it into his hands, ruining at once his prospects, his character, and his health. With a temperament that naturally inclined him to self-indulgence, the road to ruin was equally rapid and pleasant. When Amy married Henry Lester—which she did after an engagement of six months—Dick kept no bounds, and he irretrievably offended his family by intruding himself, uninvited, amongst the guests at the wedding. There was a painful scene in Amy's parlour, where he went secretly, as he himself acknowledged, in the wild hope of inducing her to break off the engagement at the eleventh hour. She was dressed ready for church, and her mother was with her. That made no

difference. Poor Dick went down on his knees, and cried, and kissed his cousin's hands, and besought her to listen to him. And Amy fainted. She fainted a second time at the altar when Dick forced himself into her presence and forbade the marriage. He was so frantic, so out of himself, that he had to be removed by compulsory measures before the service could go on. Of course, after a scene like this, his uncle's family kept no terms with him; he was forbidden ever to suffer his shadow to darken their door again—and so the poor, wild, crazed fellow went headlong to destruction. I doubt very much myself whether Amy was worth such a sacrifice; but he thought so. Life, he said, was unendurable without her, and he did not care how soon he ended it.

But this was not all. Amy died of consumption within a year of her marriage, and Dick asserted that she had been killed by bad usage. He went down to his uncle's house where she lay, and asked to see her. The request was refused, and he forced his way by the window into the room at night, as was afterwards discovered by the disarrangement of the furniture, and stayed there crying over his dead love until dawn. At her funeral he joined the mourners, and showed more grief than any of them; but as the husband was turning away, he walked up to him and shook his clenched fist in his face, crying:

"You killed her, you straight-haired dog!"

It was supposed that if he had not been restrained by the bystanders, he might have done him a mischief. His family gave it out that he was mad. Perhaps he was.

Dice, drinking, and horse-racing now soon made an end of poor Dick's five thousand pounds. He lost every shred of self-respect, and herded with the lowest of the low. There is no telling how a man's troubles may turn him—love-disappointments especially; poor Dick's turned him into a thorough scamp. He was a disgrace to the family, and a misery to himself, but there was this good left in him amidst his degrading excesses—the capability of regretting. He never enjoyed his vices or ceased to feel the horrible debasement of them. He was seen at races, prize-fights, and fairs, in rags and tatters; he was known to have wanted bread, he was suspected of theft and poaching, and his brother Tom rescued him once out of the streets, where he was singing songs disguised as a lame soldier. Tom allowed him a guinea a week, but before he had been in receipt of it a month he made the annuity over to an acquaintance for ten pounds, to take him to Doncaster, and this friend always went with him to receive the money, lest he should lose it, so that Dick suffered extremities while he was supposed to be at least fed and clothed by his family. Ten years of reckless debauchery and poignant misery reduced him to the state in which his uncle Tarrant brought him to me; his aunt Julia who had brought Tom up offered to give him money if he would go out of the country and never come back again. How he went out of it, I have told already.

When he ceased speaking, I said to encourage him:

"You'll do well yet, Dick, if you keep steady, and we make land or are picked up."

"What can it be," said Dick, without particularly answering, "that brings all these old things over my mind? There's a child's hymn I and Tom used to say at my mother's knee when we were little ones keeps running through my thoughts. It's the stars, maybe; there was a little window by my bed that I used to watch them at—a window in my room at home in Cheshire—and if I was ever afraid, as boys will be after reading a good ghost story, I would keep on saying it till I fell asleep."

"That was a good mother of yours, Dick; could you say that hymn now, do you think? Some of us might like to hear it."

"It's as clear in my mind at this minute as if my mother was here listening to me," said Dick, and he repeated:

"Hear my prayer, O! Heavenly Father,
Ere I lay me down to sleep;
Bid thy Angels, pure and holy,
Round my bed their vigil keep.

"My sins are heavy, but Thy mercy
Far outweighs them every one;
Down before Thy Cross I cast them,
Trusting in Thy help alone.

"Keep me through this night of peril
Underneath its boundless shade;
Take me to Thy rest, I pray Thee,
When my pilgrimage is made.

"None shall measure out Thy patience
By the span of human thought;
None shall bound the tender mercies
Which Thy Holy Son has bought.

"Pardon all my past transgressions,
Give me strength for days to come;
Guide and guard me with Thy blessing
Till Thy Angels bid me home."

After awhile Dick drew his coat up over his head and lay down to sleep.

"Well, poor Dick!" thought I, "it is surely a blessed thing for you that—

"None shall measure out God's patience,
By the span of human thought;
None shall bound the tender mercies
Which His Holy Son has bought."

A quiet middle-aged gentleman passenger, who was going to establish a Store out there, and had been a kind of supercargo aboard of us besides, told what follows.

She lay off Naarden — the good ship Brocken Spectre, I mean—far out in the roads; and I often thought, as I looked at her through the haze, what an ancient, ill-favoured hulk it was. I suppose I came down some three or four times that day, being in a lounging unsatisfied state of mind;

and took delight in watching the high, old-fashioned poop, as it rocked all day long in that one spot. I likened it to a French roof of the olden time, it was garnished with so many little windows: and over all was the great lantern, which might have served conveniently for the vane or cupola seen upon such structures. For all that, it was not unpicturesque, and would have filled a corner in a Vandervelde picture harmoniously enough. She was to sail at three o'clock next morning, and I was to be the solitary cabin passenger.

As evening came on, it grew prematurely dark and cloudy; while the waves acquired that dull indigo tint so significant of ugly weather. Raw gusts came sweeping in towards the shore, searching me through and through. I must own to a sinking of the heart as I took note of these symptoms, for a leaning towards ocean in any of its moods had never been one of my failings; and it augured but poorly for the state of the elements next morning. "It will have spent itself during the night," I muttered, doubtfully; and turned back to the inn to eat dinner with what comfort I might.

That place of entertainment stood by itself upon a bleak sandy hill. From its window I could see, afar off, three lights rising and falling together, just where the high poop and lantern had been performing the same ocean-dance in the daytime. I was sitting by the fire, listening ruefully to the wind, when news was brought to me that the Captain, Van Steen, had come ashore, and was waiting below to see me.

I found him walking up and down outside—a short, thick-set man—as it were, built upon the lines of his own vessel.

"Well captain, you wished to see me," I said.

"Look to this, my master," he said, bluntly. "There's a gale brewing yonder, and wild weather coming. So just see to this. If we're not round the Helder Head by to-morrow night, we may have to beat round the Bay for days and days. So look to it, master, and come aboard while there is time."

"I'm ready at any moment," I said; "but how do you expect to get round now? The sea is high enough as it is."

"No matter; the wind may be with us in the morning. We must clear the Head before to-morrow night. Why look you," he added, sinking his voice, mysteriously, "I wouldn't be off Helder to-morrow night—no, not for a sack of guilders!"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, don't you know? It's Christmas night—Jan Fagel's night—Captain Jan's!"

"Well?"

"He comes to Helder to-morrow night; he is seen in the Bay. But we are losing time, master," said he, seizing my arm; "get your things ready—these lads will carry them to the boat."

Three figures here advanced out of the shadow, and entered with me. I hastily paid the bill, and set forward with the captain for the shore, where the boat was waiting. My mails were got on board with all expedition, and we were soon far out upon the waters, making steadily for the three lights. It was not blowing very hard as yet; neither had the waves assumed the shape of what are known as white horses; but there was a heavy underground swell, and a peculiar swooping motion quite as disagreeable. Suddenly, I made out the great lantern just over head, shining dimly, as it were through a fog. We had glided under the shadow of a dark mass, wherein there were many more dim lights at long intervals—and all, together seemed performing a wild dance to the music of dismal creaking of timbers, and rattling of chains. As we came under, a voice hailed us out of the darkness—as it seemed from the region of the lantern; and presently invisible hands cast us ropes, whereby, with infinite pains and labour, I was got on deck. I was then guided down steep ways into the cabin, the best place for me under the circumstances. As soon as the wind changed, the captain said, we would put out to sea.

By the light of a dull oil-lamp overhead, that never for a moment ceased swinging, I tried to make out what my new abode was like. It was of an ancient massive fashion, with a dark oak panelling all round, rubbed smooth in many places by wear of time and friction. All round were queer little nobs and projections, mounted in brass and silver, just like the butt-ends of pistols; while here and there were snug recesses that reminded me of canons' stalls in a cathedral. The swinging lamp gave but a faint yellow light, that scarcely reached beyond the centre of the room; so that the oak-work all round cast little grotesque shadows, which had a very gloomy and depressing effect. There was a sort of oaken shelf at one end—handsomely wrought, no doubt, but a failure as to sleeping capabilities. Into this I introduced myself without delay, and soon fell off into a profound slumber, for I was weary enough.

When I awoke again, I found there was a figure standing over me, who said he was Mr. Bode the mate, who wished to know, could he serve me in any way? Had we started yet? I asked. Yes, we had started—above an hour now—but she was not making much way. Would I get up—this was Christmas day. So it was; I had forgotten that. What a place to hold that inspiring festival in! Mr. Bode, who was inclined to be communicative, then added that it was blowing great guns: whereof I had abundant confirmation from my own physical sufferings, then just commencing. No, I would not—could not get up; and so, for the rest of that day, dragged on a miserable existence, many

times wishing that the waters would rise and cover me. Late in the evening I fell into a kind of uneasy doze, which was balm of Gilead to the tempest-tost landsman.

When I awoke again, it was night once more; at least, there was the dull oil-lamp, swinging lazily as before. There was the same painful music—the same eternal creaking and straining, as of ship's timbers in agony. What o'clock was it? Where were we now? Better make an effort, and go up, and see how we were getting on—it was so lonely down here. Come in!

Here the door was opened, and Mr. Bode the mate presented himself. It was a bad night, Mr. Bode said—a very bad night.—He had come to tell me we were off the Head at last. He thought I might care to know.

"I am glad to hear it," I said faintly; "it will be something smoother in the open sea."

He shook his head. "No open sea for us to-night; no, nor to-morrow night most likely."

"What is all this mystery?" said I, now recollecting the captain's strange allusions at the inn door. "What do you mean?"

"It is Jan Fagel's night," said he solemnly. "He comes into the bay to-night. An hour more of the wind, and we should have been clear. But we did what we could—a man can do no more than his best."

"But who is Jan Fagel?"

"You never heard?"

"Never. Tell me about him."

"Well," said he, "I shan't be wanted on deck for some time yet, so I may as well be here." And Mr. Bode settled himself in one of the canons' stalls, thus retiring into the shadow, and began the history of Jan Fagel and his vessel.

"You have never heard of the famous brig Maelström, once on a time well known in these roads? No,—for you have not been much about here, I dare say; and it is only old sea-folk like myself that would care to talk to you of such things. But I can tell you this—there's not a sailor along the coast that hasn't the story, though it's now—let me see—a good hundred years since she made her last cruise. Why, I recollect when I was a boy, the old hull lying on the sands, and breaking up with every tide—for she came to that end after all—the famous Maelström, Captain Jan Fagel, commander. I have been told there never was such a boat for foul weather, but that was when he was on board of her. He was a terrible man, was Captain Fagel, and would turn wild when a gale got up; and as the wind blew harder, so he grew wilder, until at last it seemed as if he had gone mad altogether. Why, there was one night my father used to tell of, when there was a great thunderstorm, and the sea was washing over the lighthouses—the most awful night he ever was out in—it was said that when the flashes came, Captain Jan had been seen dancing and skipping upon his deck. Many of his sailors told afterwards how they heard his mad shrieks above the roaring of the wind! Some said he had sold himself to the Evil One, which I think myself more than likely, for he cared neither for God nor man.

"Well sir, Captain Fagel took first to the smuggling trade; and soon he and his famous brig became known all along the coast, from Hoek up to Helder—ay, and beyond that. But he was seen oftenest at the Head—as if he had a sort of liking for the place—and always came and went in a storm. So, that when the Zuyder was like a boiling cauldron, and the water running over the lighthouse galleries, old sailors would look up in the wind's eye, and say 'Captain Fagel's running a cargo to-night.' At last it came to this, that whenever he was seen off Helder, he was thought to bring a storm with him. And then they would shake their heads, and say Captain Fagel was abroad that night. Soon he grew tired of this work—it was too quiet for him—so he turned Rover, and ran up the black flag. He still kept up his old fashion of bearing down in a gale; and many a poor disabled craft that was struggling hard to keep herself afloat, would see the black hull of the Maelström coming down upon her in the storm, and so would perish miserably upon the rocks. He was no true sailor, sir, that captain, but a low pirate; and he came to a pirate's end. And this was the way he fell upon his last cruise, just off Helder Head yonder.

"There was a certain councillor of the town who had many times crossed him in his schemes, and had once been near taking him. Fagel hated him like poison, and swore he would have his revenge of him, one day. But the councillor did not fear him—not a bit of him, but even offered a reward to whoever would take or destroy Captain Fagel and his vessel. When the captain came to hear of this he fell to raving and foaming at the mouth, and then swore a great oath upon his own soul that he would be revenged of the councillor. And this was the way he went about it:

The councillor had a fair, young wife, Madame Elde, whom he had brought out of France some years before, and whom he loved exceedingly—foolishly, some said, for a man of his years. They and their little girl, lived together at a place called Loo, and no family could be happier. Jan Fagel knew the place well, and laid his devilish plans accordingly. So, as usual, on one of his wild, stormy nights, the brig was seen standing in to shore—for no good purpose, as everybody guessed. How he and his mad crew got to land was never accounted for—but this is certain—they broke into the house at Loo, and dragged Madame Elde and her child from their beds, and forced them down to their boats. The councillor was away in

the city; but Captain Jan knew well enough how he loved his wife, and chose this way of torturing him. An old fisherman, who lived hard by the shore, said, that he woke up suddenly in the night, and heard their screams; but they were too many for him, or he would have gone out. He was an old man, and it was only natural. They then pulled away for the ship, he standing up, and screaming at the waves like a fiend incarnate, as he was. How the poor passengers ever got alive on board was a miracle—for the waves came dashing over the bows of the boat, where they were lying, at every stroke.

"Now it fell out, that at this time, there was a British frigate cruising about these parts—for Captain Fagel had a short time before this, fired into an English vessel. The frigate was, therefore, keeping a sharp look-out for the brig, and had been looking into all the creeks and harbours along the coasts, when she was caught in this very storm—of Captain Fagel's raising. Just as she was struggling round the Head, she came upon the Maelström, taking on board her boat's crew.

"'Let go all clear!' they heard him cry, even above the storm—and then they saw the dark hull swing round, and set off along shore, where it was hard for the frigate to follow. As for Jan Fagel, if ever Satan entered into a man in this life, he must have possessed him that night! They could hear him from the other vessel, as he shrieked with delight, and swore, and bounded along his deck, when other men could scarcely keep their feet. Why, sir, one time, he was seen on the edge of the taffrail—his eyes looking in the dark like two burning coals! No doubt he would have got away from them, after all—for there was no better mariner in those seas—when just as he was coming round a point, they heard a crash, and down came his topmast upon his deck. The sailors rushed to clear away the wreck.

"'Bring up the woman,' he roared through his trumpet. 'Bring up the woman and child, you sea imps!' Though his ship was in danger, he thought of the councillor. Some of them rushed down into the hold, and came up in a moment with Madame Elde and the little girl. She was quite scared and sank down upon the deck, as if she were insensible.

"'A handsome creature, sir,' they said, even some of those savages felt for her. They heard her saying over and over again to herself:

"'O, such a Christmas night! Such a Christmas night!'

"He overheard her.

"'Ah, ah! witch! you shall have a merry Christmas. Never fear. So should your husband—curse him—if we had him here.'

"She started up with a scream when she heard him speaking. And then they saw her standing, with her long black hair blown back by the wind, and her arms out, as if she were praying. 'Where shall Thy judgments find this man?'

"'Here, witch! Look for me here on a stormy night—any night; next Christmas, if you like. Hi, lads! get a sail here, and send them over the side.'

"Even those ruffians hung back, for it was too awful a night for them to add murder to their other sins. So, with many oaths, Captain Fagel went forward himself to seize the lady.

"'He shall meet me before the Judgment seat,' said she, still praying.

"'Cant away, sorceress! come back here of a stormy night, and I'll meet you: I'm not afraid;' and he laughed long and loud.

"Then he flung the wet sail round them, and with his own hands cast them into the sea. The storm came on fiercer than ever, and they thought that the ship's timbers were going to part. But Jan Fagel strode about his deck, and gave his orders, and she bore up well before the wind. It seemed that no harm could come to that ship when he was on board of her. As for the frigate, she had long since got away into the open sea. But the lady's words were not to be in vain, for just as he was going one of his mad bounds along the poop, his foot caught in a coil of rope, and he went over with an unearthly scream into the black, swollen sea. All the crew ran to look out after him, but, strange to tell, without so much as thinking of casting him a rope. It seemed as if they had lost their sense for a time, and could only stand there looking into the waves that had swept him off. Just then, the wind went down a little, and they heard a voice high in the mainmast-top, as if some one were calling; and these words came to them very clear and distinct: 'Yo, yo! Jan Fagel, yo!' Then all the crew at the vessel's side, as if they had caught some of his own devilish spirit, could not keep themselves from giving out, in a great wild chorus, 'Yo, yo! Jan Fagel, yo!' Once more the voice came from the mainmast-top, calling, 'Yo, yo! Jan Fagel, yo!' and again the crew answered, louder than before, as if they were possessed. He was seen no more after that.

"The memory of that night never left that wicked crew; and many of them, when dying quietly in their beds long after, started up with that cry, as though they were answering a call, and so passed away to their last account.

"Every year, as sure as Christmas night comes round, Jan Fagel comes into the bay to keep his word with Madame Elde. And, any ship that is off the Head then, must wait and beat about until midnight; when he goes away.

"But they are wanting me on deck," said Mr. Bode, looking at his watch. "I have stayed too long as it is."

Mr. Bode hastily departed, leaving me to ponder over his wild legend. Ruminating upon it, and listening to the rushing of the

water, close to my ear, I fell off again in a sleep, and began to dream; and, of course, dreamed of Captain Jan Fagel.

It was a wild and troubled sleep, that I had; and I am sure, if any one had been standing near, they would have seen me starting and turning uneasily, as if in grievous trouble. First, I thought I was ashore again, in a sheltered haven, safely delivered from all this wretched tossing. And I recollect how inexpressibly delightful the feeling of repose was, after all these weary labours. By-and-by, I remarked low-roofed old-fashioned houses all about, seemingly of wood, with little galleries running round the windows. And I saw stately burghers walking, in dresses centuries old, and ladies with great round frills about their necks, and looking very stiff and majestic, sat and talked to the burghers. They were coming in and out of the queer houses, and some passed quite close to me, saluting me, as they did so, very graciously. One thing seemed very strange to me. They had all a curious dried look about their faces, and a sort of stony cast in their eyes, which I could not make out. Still they came and went, and I looked on and wondered. Suddenly I saw the little Dutch houses and the figures all quivering and getting indistinct, and gradually the picture faded away until it grew slowly into the shape of the cabin where I was now lying. There it was, all before me, with the canons' stalls and the dull swinging lamp, and I myself leaning on one hand in the carved crib, and thinking what a weary voyage this was! How monotonous the rushing sound of the water! Then my dream went on, and it seemed to me that I took note of a canon's stall in the centre, something larger and better-fashioned than the others—the dean's, most likely, I concluded wisely, when he comes to service. And then on that hint, as it were, I seemed to travel away over the waters to ancient aisles, and tracery and soft ravishing music, and snowy figures seen afar off duskily amid clouds of incense. In time, too, all that faded away, and I was back again in the oak cabin, with the sickly yellow light suffusing everything, and a dark misty figure sitting right opposite. He caused me no surprise or astonishment, and I received him there as a matter of course, as people do in dreams. I had seen figures like him somewhere. In Rembrandt's pictures, was it? Most likely; for there was the large broad hat, and the stiff white collar and tassels, and the dark jerkin; only there was a rusty, mouldering look about his garments that seemed very strange to me. He had an ancient sword, too, on which he leaned his arm; and so sat there motionless, looking on the ground. He sat that way I don't know how long: I, as it seemed to me, studying him intently: when suddenly the rushing sound ceased, and there came a faint cry across the waters, as from afar off. It was the old cry: "Yo, yo! Jan Fagel, yo!" Then I saw the figure raise its head suddenly, and the yellow light fell upon his face—such a mournful, despairing face!—with the same stony gaze I had seen in the others. Again the fearful cry came—nearer, as it seemed; and I saw the figure rise up slowly and walk across the cabin to the door. As he passed me he turned his dead, lack-lustre eyes full upon me, and looked at me for an instant. Never shall I forget that moment. It was as if a horrid weight was pressing on me. I felt such agony that I awoke with a start, and found myself sitting up and trembling all over. But at that instant; whether the dreamy influence had not wholly passed away, or whatever was the reason I don't know; I can swear that, above the rushing sound of the waves and the whistling of the wind, I heard that ghostly chorus "Yo, yo! Jan Fagel, yo!" quite clear and distinct.

An old Seaman in the Long-boat

sang this ballad, as his story, to a curious sort of tuneful no-tune, which none of the rest could remember afterwards.

I HAVE seen a fiercer tempest,
Known a louder whirlwind blow.
I was wreck'd off red Algiers,
Six-and-thirty years ago.
Young I was,—and yet old seamen
Were not strong or calm as I;
While life held such treasures for me,
I felt sure I could not die.

Life I struggled for—and saved it;
Life alone—and nothing more;
Bruised, half dead, alone and helpless,
I was cast upon the shore.
I fear'd the pitiless rocks of Ocean;
So the great sea rose—and then
Cast me from her friendly bosom,
On the pitiless hearts of men.

Gaunt and dreary ran the mountains
With black gorges up the land;
Up to where the lonely Desert
Spreads her burning dreary sand:
In the gorges of the mountains,
On the plain beside the sea,
Dwelt my stern and cruel masters,
The black Moors of Barbary.

Ten long years I toil'd among them,
Hopeless—as I used to say;
Now I know Hope burnt within me
Fiercer, stronger, day by day:
Those dim years of toil and sorrow
Like one long dark dream appear;
One long day of weary waiting;—
Then each day was like a year.

How I curst the land—my prison;
How I curst the serpent sea,—
And the Demon Fate, that shower'd
All her curses upon me:
I was mad, I think—God pardon
Words so terrible and wild—
This voyage would have been my last one,
For I left a wife and child.

Never did one tender vision
Fade away before my sight,
Never once through all my slavery,
Burning day or dreary night;
In my soul it lived, and kept me,
Now I feel, from black despair,
And my heart was not quite broken,
While they lived and blest me there.

When at night my task was over,
I would hasten to the shore;
(All was strange and foreign inland,
Nothing I had known before).
Strange look'd the bleak mountain passes,
Strange the red glare and black shade,
And the Oleanders, waving
To the sound the fountains made.

Then I gazed at the great Ocean,
Till she grew a friend again;
And because she knew old England,
I forgave her all my pain:
So the blue still sky above me,
With its white clouds' fleecy fold,
And the glimmering stars (though brighter),
Look'd like home and days of old.

And a calm would fall upon me;
Worn perhaps with work and pain,
The wild hungry longing left me,
And I was myself again:
Looking at the silver waters,
Looking up at the far sky,
Dreams of home and all I left there
Floated sorrowfully by.

A fair face, but pale with sorrow,
With blue eyes, brimful of tears,
And the little red mouth, quivering
With a smile, to hide its fears;
Holding out her baby towards me,
From the sky she look'd on me;
So it was that I last saw her,
As the ship put out to sea.

Sometimes (and a pang would seize me
That the years were floating on)
I would strive to paint her, alter'd,
And the little baby gone:
She no longer young and girlish,
The child, standing by her knee,
And her face, more pale and sadden'd
With the weariness for me.

Then I saw, as night grew darker,
How she taught my child to pray,
Holding its small hands together,
For its father, far away;
And I felt her sorrow, weighing
Heavier on me than mine own;
Pitying her blighted spring-time,
And her joy so early flown.

Till upon my hands (now harden'd
With the rough harsh toil of years,)
Bitter drops of anguish, falling,
Woke me from my dream, to tears;
Woke me as a slave, an outcast,
Leagues from home, across the deep;
So—though you may call it childish—
So I sobb'd myself to sleep.

Well, the years sped on—my sorrow
Calmer, and yet stronger grown,
Was my shield against all suffering,
Poorer, meaner, than her own.

So my cruel master's harshness
Fell upon me all in vain,
Yet the tale of what we suffer'd
Echo'd back from main to main.

You have heard in a far country
Of a self-devoted band,
Vow'd to rescue Christian captives
Pining in a foreign land.
And these gentle-hearted strangers
Year by year go forth from Rome,
In their hands the hard-earn'd ransom
To restore some exiles home.

I was freed: they broke the tidings
Gently to me; but indeed
Hour by hour sped on, I knew not
What the words meant—I was freed!
Better so, perhaps, while sorrow
(More akin to earthly things)
Only strains the sad heart's fibres—
Joy, bright stranger, breaks the strings.

Yet at last it rush'd upon me,
And my heart beat full and fast;
What were now my years of waiting,
What was all the dreary past?
Nothing, to the impatient throbbing
I must bear across the sea:
Nothing to the eternal hours
Still between my home and me!

How the voyage pass'd, I know not;
Strange it was once more to stand,
With my countrymen around me,
And to clasp an English hand.
But, through all, my heart was dreaming
Of the first words I should hear,
In the gentle voice that echo'd,
Fresh as ever, on my ear.

Should I see her start of wonder,
And the sudden truth arise,
Flushing all her face and lightening
The dimm'd splendour of her eyes?
O! to watch the fear and doubting
Stir the silent depths of pain,
And the rush of joy—then melting
Into perfect peace again.

And the child!—but why remember
Foolish fancies that I thought?
Every tree and every hedgerow
From the well-known past I brought:
I would picture my dear cottage,
See the crackling wood-fire burn,
And the two beside it, seated
Watching, waiting, my return.

So, at last we reach'd the harbour.
I remember nothing more
Till I stood, my sick heart throbbing
With my hand upon the door.
There I paused—I heard her speaking;
Low, soft, murmuring words she said;
Then I first knew the dumb terror
I had had, lest she were dead.

It was evening in late autumn,
And the gusty wind blew chill;
Autumn leaves were falling round me,
And the red sun lit the hill.
Six and twenty years are vanish'd
Since then—I am old and grey—
But I never told to mortal
What I saw, until this day.

She was seated by the fire,
In her arms she held a child,
Whispering baby-words caressing,
And then, looking up, she smiled.
Smiled on him who stood beside her—
O! the bitter truth was told!
In her look of trusting fondness,
I had seen the look of old.

But she rose and turn'd towards me
(Cold and dumb I waited there),
With a shriek of fear and terror,
And a white face of despair.
He had been an ancient comrade—
Not a single word we said,
While we gazed upon each other,
He the living: I the dead!

I drew nearer, nearer to her,
And I took her trembling hand,
Looking on her white face, looking
That her heart might understand
All the love and all the pity
That my lips refused to say!
I thank God no thought save sorrow
Rose in our crush'd hearts that day.

Bitter tears that desolate moment,
Bitter, bitter tears we wept
We three broken hearts together,
While the baby smiled and slept.
Tears alone—no words were spoken,
Till he—till her husband said
That my boy (I had forgotten
The poor child), that he was dead.

Then at last I rose, and, turning,
Wrung his hand, but made no sign;
And I stoop'd and kiss'd her forehead
Once more, as if she were mine.
Nothing of farewell I utter'd,
Save in broken words to pray
That God in His great love would bless her—
Then in silence pass'd away.

Over the great restless ocean
For twenty and six years I roam;
All my comrades, old and weary,
Have gone back to die at home.
Home! yes, I shall reach a haven,
I, too, shall reach home and rest;
I shall find her waiting for me
With our baby on her breast.

While the foregoing story was being told, I had kept my eye fixed upon little Willy Lindsey, a young Scotch boy (one of the two apprentices), who had been recommended to Captain Ravender's care by a friend in Glasgow; and very sad it was to see the expression of his face. All the early part of the voyage he had been a favourite in the ship. The ballads he sang, and the curious old stories he told, made him a popular visitor in the cabin, no less than among the people. Though only entered as apprentice seaman, Captain Ravender had kept him as much about him as he could; and I am bold to say, the lad's affection for Captain Ravender was as sincere as if he had been one of his own blood. Even before the wreck, a change had taken place in his manner. He grew silent and thoughtful. Mrs. Atherfield and Miss Coleshaw, who had been very kind to him, observed the alteration, and bantered him on the melancholy nature of the songs he sang to them, and the sad air with which he went about the duties of the vessel. I asked him if anything had occurred to make him dull; but he put me off with a laugh, and at last told me that he was thinking about his home; for, said he, a certain anniversary was coming soon; "and maybe I'll tell you," he added, "why the expectation of it makes me so sorrowful."

He was a nice, delicate, almost feminine-looking boy, of sixteen or seventeen; the son of a small farmer in Ayrshire, as Captain Ravender's Glasgow friend had told him, and, as usual with his countrymen, a capital hand at letters and accounts. He had brought with him a few books, chiefly of the wild and supernatural kind; and it seemed as if he had given way to his imagination more than was quite healthy, perhaps, for the other faculties of his mind. But we all set down his delight and belief in ghost stories and such like, to the superstition of his country, where the folks seem to make up for being the most matter-of-fact people in Europe in the affairs of this world, by being the wildest and most visionary inquirers into the affairs of the next. Willy had been useful to all departments on board. The steward had employed him at his ledger, Captain Ravender at his reckonings, and as to the passengers, they had made quite a friend and companion of the youth.

So I watched his looks, as I've said before, and I now beckoned Willy to come to my side, that I might keep him as warm as I could. At first he either did not perceive my signal, or was too apathetic or too deep sunk in his own thoughts to act upon it. But the carpenter, who sat next him, seeing my motion, helped him across the boat, and I put my arm round his shoulders.

"Bear up, Willy," I said, "you're young and strong, and, with the help of Heaven, we shall all live to see our friends again."

The boy's eye brightened with hope for a moment; then he shook his head and said:

"You're very kind to say so, sir; but it canna be—at least for me."

The night was now closing fast in, but there was still light enough to see his face. It was quite calm, and wore a sort of smile. Everybody listened to hear what the poor laddie said; and I whispered to him:

"You promised to tell me why you were depressed by the coming of an anniversary, Willy. When is it?"

"It's to-night," he said, with a solemn voice. "And O! how different this is from what it used to be! It's the birth-day o' my sister Jean."

"Come, tell us all about it," I said. "Maybe, speaking it out openly will ease

your mind. Here, rest on my shoulder. Now say on."

We all tried to catch his words, and he began:

"It's two years ago, this very day, since we had such a merry night of it in my father's house at home. He was a farmer in a sma' way up among the hills above the Doon; and had the lands on a good tack, and was thought a richer man than any of his neighbours. There was only Jean and me o' the family; and I'm thinking nobody was ever so happy or well cared for as I was a' the time I was young. For my mither would let me want for nothing, and took me on her knee and tauld me long histories o' the Bruce and Wallace; and strange adventures with the warlocks; and sang me a' Burns' songs, forbye reading me the grand auld stories out o' the Bible, about the death o' Goliath and the meeting o' King Saul and the Witch of Endor. Jean was a kind o' mither to me, too; for she was five years older, and spoilt me as much as she could. She was so bonny, it was a pleasure to look at her; and she helpit in the dairy, and often milkt the cows hersel'; and in the winter nights sat by the side o' the bleezy fire, and turned the reel or span, keepin' time wi' some lang ballad about cruel Ranken coming in and killing Lady Margaret; or the ship that sailed away to Norway wi' Sir Patrick Spence, and sank wi' all the crew. The schoolmaster came up, when he was able, to gi'e me lessons; and as the road was long, and the nights were sometimes dark, it soon grew into the common custom for him to come up ow'r the hills on Friday, when the school was skailt, and stay till the Monday morning. He was a young man that had been intended for a minister, but the college expenses had been too much, and he had settled down as the parish teacher at Shalloch; and we always called him Dominie Blair. All the week through, we looked for the Dominie's coming. Jean and I used to go and meet him at the bend o' the hill, where he came off from the high-road, and he began his lessons to me in botany the moment we turned towards home. I noticed that he aye required the specimens that grew at the side o' the burns that ran down valleys a good way off; but I was very vain of my running, and used to rush down the gully and gather the flower or weed, and overtake the two before they had walked on a mile. So you see, sir, it was na long before it was known all over the country side that Dominie Blair was going to marry my sister Jean. Everybody thought it a capital match, for Jean had beauty and siller, and Mr. Blair was the cleverest man in the county, and had the promise of the mastership of a school in the East country, with ninety pounds a-year. Our house grew happier now than ever; and when Jean's birthday came round, there was a gathering from far and near to do honour to the bonniest and kindest lass in all the parish. The minister himsel' came up on his pony, and drank prosperity to the young folks at the door; and inside at night there was a supper for all the neighbours, and John Chalmers played on the fiddle, and a' the rest of us sang songs, and danced and skirled like mad; and at last, when Jean's health was drank, with many wishes for her happiness, up she gets and lays her arms round my auld mither's neck, and bursts out into a great passion o' tears; and when she recovered herself, she said she would never be so happy anywhere else, and that weel or ill, dead or alive—in the body or in the spirit—she would aye come back on that night, and look in on the hame where she had spent sae sunshiny a life. Some o' them laughed at the wild affection she showed; and some took it seriously, and thought she had tied herself down by ow'r solemn a bargain; but in a wee while the mirth and frolicking gaed on as before, and all the company confessed it was the happiest evening they had ever spent in their lives. Do you ken Loch Luart, sir?—a wee bit water that stretches across between the Lureloch and the Breelen? Ah! the grand shadows that pass along it when you stand on the north side and look over to the hill. There's a great blackness settled upon the face, as if the sun had died away from the heavens altogether, till when he comes round the corner o' the mountain, a glorious procession o' sunbeams and colours taks its course across the whole length o' the water, and all the hill sides give out a kind o' glow, and at last the loch seems all on fire, and you can scarcely look at it for the brightness. A small skiff was kept at the side, for it saved the shepherds miles o' steep climbing to get from flock to flock, as it cut off two or three miles o' the distance between our house and Shalloch. One Friday, soon after the merry meeting at Jean's birthday, she set off as usual to meet Mr. Blair. How far she went, or where she met him, nobody could tell, for nothing was ever seen or heard o' them from that day to this; only the skiff on Loch Luart was found keel up, and the prints o' feet that answered to their size were seen on the wet bank. Nothing wad persuade my mother for many a day that she wasna coming back. When she heard a step at the door, she used to flush up with a great redness in her cheek, and run to let her in. Then when she saw it was a stranger, she left the door open and came back into the kitchen without sayin' a word. My father spoke very little, but sometimes he seemed to forget that Jean was taken away, and called for her to come to him in a cheery voice, as he used to do; and then, wi' a sudden shake o' his head, he remembered that she was gone, and passed away to his work as if his heart was broken. And other things came on to disturb him

now, for some bank, or railway, or something o' the kind, where he had bought some shares, failed with a great crash, and he was called on to make up the loss; and he grew careless about everything that happened, and the horses and carts were seized for debt, and a' the cows except two were taken away, and the place began to go to wrack and ruin; and at last Jean's birthday cam' round again. But we never spoke about it the whole day long, though none of the three thought of anything else. My father pretended to be busy in the field; my mother span—never letting the thread out o' her hand; and as for me, I wandered about the hills from early morning, and only came back when the dark night began. All through the lengthening hours we sat and never spoke; but sometimes my father put a fresh supply of peats upon the fire, and stirred it up into a blaze, as if it pleased him to see the great sparkles flying up the chimney. At last my mother, all of a sudden, ceased her spinning, and said, 'Hark! do you no' hear somebody outside?' And we listened without getting up from our seats. We heard a sound as if somebody was slipping by on tip-toe on the way to the Byre; and then we heard a low, wailing sound, as if the person was trying to restrain some great sorrow; and immediately we heard the same footstep, as if it were lost in snow, coming up to the house. My mither stood up wi' her hand stretched out, and looked at the window. Outside the pane—where the rose-tree has grown sae thick it half hides the lower half—we heard a rustling, as if somebody was putting aside the leaves, and then, when a sudden flicker o' the flame threw its light upon the casement, we saw the faint image o' a bonny pale face—very sad to look on—wi' lang tresses o' yellow hair hanging straight down the cheeks, as if it was dripping wet, and heard low, plaintive sobs; but nothing that we could understand. My mither ran forward, as if to embrace the visitor, and cried, 'Jean! Jean! O, let me speak to you, my bairn!' But the flame suddenly died away in the grate, and we saw nothing mair. But we all knew now that Jean had been drowned in Loch Luart, and that she minded the promise she had made to come and see the auld house upon her birthday."

Here the boy paused in his narrative for a moment, and I felt his breath coming and going very quick, as if his strength was getting rapidly exhausted.

"Rest a while, Willy," I said, "and try, if you can, to sleep."

But nothing could restrain him from finishing his tale.

"Na, na! I canna rest upon your arm, sir. I ha'e wark to do, and it maun be done this night—wae's me! I didna think, last year at this time, that ever I wad be here." He looked round with a shudder at the coiling waves that rose high at the side of the boat, and shut out the faint glimmer that still lingered on the horizon line. "So Jean was drowned, ye see," he continued; "and couldna put foot inside—for a' they can do is to look in and see what's doing at the auld fireside through the window. But even this was a comfort to my mither; and as I saw how glad it made her to have this assurance that she wasna forgotten, I made her the same promise that Jean had done on her birthday: ill or weel, happy or miserable, in the body or in the spirit—I wad find my way to the farm-house, and gi'e her some sign that I loved her as I had always done. And now I ken what they're doing as if I was at hame. They're sitting sad and lonely in the silent kitchen. My father puts fresh peats upon the grate, and watches their flame as it leaps and crackles up the fireplace; and my mither—Ah!"—here he stretched forward as if to see some object before him more distinctly—"ah! she's spinning, spinning as if to keep herself from thinking—and tears are running down her face; and I see the cheery fire, and the heather bed in the corner, and the round table in the middle, and the picture o' Abraham and Isaac on the wall, and my fishing-rod hung up aboon the mantelpiece, and my herding-staff, and my old blue bonnet. But how cold it is, sir," he went on, turning to me; "I felt a touch on my shoulder just now that made me creep as if the hand were ice; and I looked up and saw the same face we had noticed last year; and I feel the clammy fingers yet, and they go downward—downward, chilling me a' the way till my blood seems frozen, and I canna speak. O, for anither look at the fire and the warm cosy room, and my father's white head, and my puir auld mither's een!"

So saying, he tried to rise, and seemed to be busy putting aside something that interfered with his view. "The rose-tree!" he said; "it's thicker than ever, and I canna see clear!" At last he appeared to get near the object he sought; and, after altering his position, as if to gain a perfect sight, he said: "I see them a' again. O, mither! turn your face this way, for ye see I've kept my word; and we're both here. Jean's beside me, and very cold—and we darena come in." He watched for about a minute, still gazing intently, and then, with a joyous scream, he exclaimed: "She sees me,—she sees me! Did na ye hear her cry? O mither, mither! tak' me to your arms, for I'm chilled wi' the salt water, and naething will make me warm again."

I tightened my hold of poor Willy as he spoke, for he gradually lost his power, and at last lay speechless with his head on my shoulder. I concealed from the rest the sad event that occurred in a few minutes, and kept the body hidden till the darkest part of the night, closely wrapped in my cloak.

THE DELIVERANCE.

When the sun rose on the twenty-seventh day of our calamity, the first question that I secretly asked myself was, How many more mornings will the stoutest of us live to see? I had kept count, ever since we took to the boats, of the days of the week; and I knew that we had now arrived at another Thursday. Judging by my own sensations (and I believe I had as much strength left as the best man among us), I came to the conclusion that, unless the mercy of Providence interposed to effect our deliverance, not one of our company could hope to see another morning after the morning of Sunday.

Two discoveries that I made—after redeeming my promise overnight, to serve out with the morning whatever eatable thing I could find—helped to confirm me in my gloomy view of our future prospects. In the first place, when the few coffee-berries left, together with a small allowance of water, had been shared all round, I found on examining the lockers that not one grain of provision remained, fore or aft, in any part of the boat, and that our stock of fresh water was reduced to not much more than would fill a wine-bottle. In the second place, after the berries had been shared, and the water equally divided, I noticed that the sustenance thus administered produced no effect whatever, even of the most momentary kind, in raising the spirits of the passengers (excepting in one case) or in rallying the strength of the crew. The exception was Mr. Rarx. This tough and greedy old sinner seemed to wake up from the trance he had lain in so long, when the smell of the berries and water was under his nose. He swallowed his share with a gulp that many a younger and better man in the boat might have envied; and went maundering on to himself afterwards, as if he had got a new lease of life. He fancied now that he was digging a gold mine, all by himself, and going down bodily straight through the earth at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour. "Leave me alone," says he, "leave me alone. The lower I go, the richer I get. Down I go!—down, down, down, down, till I burst out at the other end of the world in a shower of gold!" So he went on, kicking feebly with his heels from time to time against the bottom of the boat.

But, as for all the rest, it was a pitiful and dreadful sight to see of how little use their last shadow of a meal was to them. I myself attended, before anybody else was served, to the two poor women. Miss Coleshaw shook her head faintly, and pointed to her throat, when I offered her the few berries that fell to her share. I made a shift to crush them up fine and mix them with a little water, and got her to swallow that miserable drop of drink with the greatest difficulty. When it was down there came no change for the better over her face. Nor did she recover, for so much as a moment, the capacity to speak, even in a whisper. I next tried Mrs. Atherfield. It was hard to wake her out of the half-swooning, half-sleeping condition in which she lay,—and harder still to get her to open her lips when I put the tin-cup to them. When I had at last prevailed on her to swallow her allowance, she shut her eyes again, and fell back into her old position. I saw her lips moving; and, putting my ear close to them, caught some of the words she was murmuring to herself. She was still dreaming of The Golden Lucy. She and the child were walking somewhere by the banks of a lake, at the time when the buttercups are out. The Golden Lucy was gathering the buttercups, and making herself a watch-chain out of them, in imitation of the chain that her mother wore. They were carrying a little basket with them, and were going to dine together in a great hollow tree growing on the banks of the lake. To get this pretty picture painted on one's mind as I got it, while listening to the poor mother's broken words, and then to look up at the haggard faces of the men in the boat, and at the wild ocean rolling all round us, was such a change from fancy to reality as it has fallen, I hope, to few men's lots to experience.

My next thought, when I had done my best for the women, was for the Captain. I was free to risk losing my own share of water, if I pleased, so I tried, before tasting it myself, to get a little between his lips; but his teeth were fast clenched, and I had neither strength nor skill to open them. The faint warmth still remained, thank God, over his heart—but, in all other respects he lay beneath us like a dead man. In covering him up again as comfortably as I could, I found a bit of paper crunched in one of his hands, and took it out. There was some writing on it, but not a word was readable. I supposed, poor fellow, that he had been trying to write some last instructions for me, just before he dropped at his post. If they had been ever so easy to read, they would have been of no use now. To follow instructions we must have had some power to shape the boat's course in a given direction—and this, which we had been gradually losing for some days past, we had now lost altogether.

I had hoped that the serving out of the refreshment would have put a little modicum of strength into the arms of the men at the oars; but, as I have hinted, this hope turned out to be perfectly fruitless. Our last mockery of a meal, which had done nothing for the passengers, did nothing either for the crew—except to aggravate the pangs of hunger in the men who were still strong enough to feel them. While the weather

held moderate, it was not of much consequence if one or two of the rowers kept dropping, in turn, into a kind of faint sleep over their oars. But if it came on to blow again (and we could expect nothing else in those seas and at that time of the year), how was I to steer, when the blades of the oars were out of the water ten times as often asthey were in? The lives which we had undergone such suffering to preserve would have been lost in an instant by the swamping of the boat, if the wind had risen on the morning of Thursday, and had caught us trying to row any longer.

Feeling this, I resolved, while the weather held moderately fine, to hoist the best substitute for a sail that we could produce, and to drive before the wind, on the chance (the last we had to hope for) of a ship picking us up. We had only continued to use the oars up to this time, in order to keep the course which the Captain had pointed out as likeliest to bring us near the land. Sailing had been out of the question from the first, the masts and suits of sails belonging to each boat having been out of them at the time of the wreck, and having gone down with the ship. This was an accident which there was no need to deplore, for we were too crowded from the first to admit of handling the boats properly, under their regular press of sail, in anything like rough weather.

Having made up my mind on what it was necessary to do, I addressed the men, and told them that any notion of holding longer on our course with the oars was manifestly out of the question, and dangerous to all on board, as their own common sense might tell them, in the state to which the stoutest arms among us were now reduced. They looked round on each other as I said that, each man seeming to think his neighbour weaker than himself. I went on, and told them that we must take advantage of our present glimpse of moderate weather, and hoist the best sail we could set up, and drive before the wind, in the hope that it might please God to direct us in the way of some ship before it was too late. "Our only chance, my men," I said, in conclusion, "is the chance of being picked up; and in these desolate seas one point of the compass is just as likely a point for our necessities as another. Half of you keep the boat before the sea, the other half bring out your knives, and do as I tell you." The prospect of being relieved from the oars struck the wandering attention of the men directly; and they said, "Ay, ay, sir!" with something like a faint reflection of their former readiness, when the good ship was under their feet, and the mess-cans were filled with plenty of wholesome food.

Thanks to Captain Ravender's forethought in providing both boats with a coil of rope, we had our lashings, and the means of making what rigging was wanted, ready to hand. One of the oars was made fast to the thwart, and well stayed fore and aft, for a mast. A large pilot coat that I wore was spread; enough of sail for us. The only difficulty that puzzled me was occasioned by the necessity of making a yard. The men tried to tear up one of the thwarts, but were not strong enough. My own knife had been broken in the attempt to split a bit of plank for them; and I was almost at my wit's end, when I luckily thought of searching the Captain's pockets for his knife. I found it—a fine large knife of Sheffield manufacture, with plenty of blades, and a small saw among them. With this we made a shift to saw off about a third of another oar; and then the difficulty was conquered; and we got my pilot-coat hoisted on our jury-mast, and rigged it as nigh as we could to the fashion of a lug-sail.

I had looked anxiously towards the Surf-boat, while we were rigging our mast, and observed, with a feeling of great relief, that the men in her—as soon as they discovered what we were about—were wise enough to follow our example. They got on faster than we did; being less put to it for room to turn round in. We set our sails as nearly as possible about the same time; and it was well for both boats that we finished our work when we did. At noon the wind began to rise again to a stiff breeze, which soon knocked up a heavy, tumbling sea. We drove before it in a direction North and by East, keeping wonderfully dry, considering all things. The mast stood well; and the sail, small as it was, did good service in steadying the boat and lifting her easily over the seas. I felt the cold after the loss of my coat, but not so badly as I had feared; for the two men who were with me in the stern sheets, sat as close as they could on either side of me, and helped with the warmth of their own bodies to keep the warmth in mine. Forward, I told off half-a-dozen of the most trustworthy of the men who could still muster strength enough to keep their eyes open, to set a watch, turn and turn about, on our frail rigging. The wind was steadily increasing, and if any accident happened to our mast, the chances were that the boat would broach-to, and that every one of us would go to the bottom.

So we drove on—all through that day—sometimes catching sight of the Surf-boat a little ahead of us—sometimes losing her altogether in the scud. How little and frail, how very different to the kind of boat that I had expected to see, she looked to my eyes now that I was out of her, and saw what she showed like on the waters for the first time! But to return to the Long-boat. The watch on the rigging was relieved every two hours, and at the same regular periods all the brightest eyes left amongst us looked out for the smallest vestige of a sail in view, and looked in vain. Among the passengers, nothing happened in the way of a change—except that

Miss Coleshaw seemed to grow fainter, and that Mrs. Atherfield got restless, as if she were waking out of her long dream about the Golden Lucy.

It got on towards sunset. The wind was rising to half a gale. The clouds which had been heavy all over the firmament since noon, were lifting to the westward, and leaving there, over the horizon line of the ocean, a long strip of clear pale greenish sky, overhung by a cloud-bank, whose ragged edges were tipped with burning crimson by the sun. I did not like the look of the night, and, keeping where I was, in the forward part of the boat, I helped the men to ease the strain off our mast, by lowering the yard a little and taking a pull on the sheet, so as to present to the wind a smaller surface even of our small sail. Noting the wild look of the weather, and the precautions we were taking against the chance of a gale rising in the night—and being, furthermore, as I believe, staggered in their minds by the death that had taken place among them—three of the passengers struggled up in the bottom of the boat, clasped their arms round me as if they were drowning men already, and hoarsely clamoured for a last drink of water, before the storm rose and sent us all to the bottom.

"Water you shall have," I said, "when I think the time has come to serve it out. The time has not come yet."

"Water, pray!" they all three groaned together. Two more passengers who were asleep, woke up, and joined the cry.

"Silence!" I said. "There are not two spoonsful of fresh water left for each man in the boat. I shall wait three hours more for the chance of rain before I serve that out. Silence, and drop back to your places!"

They let go of me, but clamoured weakly for water still; and, this time, the voices of some of the crew joined them. At this moment, to my great alarm (for I thought they were going mad and turning violent against me), I was seized round the neck by one of the men, who had been standing up, holding on by the mast, and looking out steadily to the westward.

I raised my right hand to free myself; but before I touched him, the sight of the man's face close to mine made me drop my arm again. There was a speechless, breathless, frantic joy in it, that made all the blood in my veins stand still in a moment.

"Out with it!" I said. "Man alive, out with it, for God's sake!"

His breath beat on my cheek in hot, quick, heavy gasps; but he could not utter a word. For a moment he let go of the mast (tightening his hold on me with the other arm) and pointed out westward—then slid heavily down on to the thwart behind us.

I looked westward, and saw that one of the two trustworthy men whom I had left at the helm was on his feet looking out westward, too. As the boat rose, I fixed my eyes on the strip of clear greenish sky in the west, and on the bright line of the sea just under it. The boat dipped again before I could see anything. I squeezed my eyelids together to get the water out of them, and when we rose again looked straight into the middle of the bright sea-line. My heart bounded as if it would choke me—my tongue felt like a cinder in my mouth—my knees gave way under me—I dropped down on to the thwart, and sobbed out, with a great effort, as if I had been dumb for weeks before, and had only that instant found my speech:

"A sail! a sail!"

The words were instantly echoed by the man in the stern sheets.

"Sail, ho!" he screeches out, turning round on us, and swinging his arms about his head like a madman.

This made three of our company who had seen the ship already, and that one fact was sufficient to remove all dread lest our eyes might have been deceiving us. The great fear now was, not that we were deluded, but that we might come to some serious harm through the excess of joy among the people; that is to say, among such of the people as still had the sense to feel and the strength to express what they felt. I must record in my own justification, after confessing that I lost command over myself altogether on the discovery of the sail, that I was the first who set the example of self-control. I was in a manner forced to this by the crew frantically entreating me to lay-to until we could make out what course the ship was steering—a proceeding which, with the sea then running, with the heavy lading of the boat, and with such feeble substitutes for mast and sail as we possessed, must have been attended with total destruction to us all. I tried to remind the men of this, but they were in such a transport—hugging each other round the neck, and crying and laughing all in a breath—that they were not fit to listen to reason. Accordingly, I myself went to the helm again, and chose the steadiest of my two men in the after part of the boat, as a guard over the sheet, with instructions to use force, if necessary, towards any one who stretched out so much as a finger to it. The wind was rising every minute, and we had nothing for it but to scud, and be thankful to God's mercy that we had sea-room to do it in.

"It will be dark in an hour's time, sir," says the man left along with me when I took the helm again. "We have no light to show. The ship will pass us in the night. Lay to, sir! For the love of Heaven, give us all a chance, and lay to!" says he, and goes down on his knees before me, wringing his hands.

"Lay to!" says I. "Lay to, under a coat! Lay to, in a boat like this, with the wind getting up to a gale! A seaman like you talk in that way! Who have I got along here with me? Sailors who know their craft,

or a pack of long-shore lubbers, who ought to be turned adrift in a ferry-boat on a pond?" My heart was heavy enough, God knows, but I spoke out as loud as I could, in that light way, to try and shame the men back to their proper senses. I succeeded at least in restoring silence; and that was something in such a condition as ours.

My next anxiety was to know if the men in the Surf-Boat had sighted the sail to the westward. She was still driving a-head of us, and the first time I saw her rise on the waves, I made out a signal on board—a strip of cloth fastened to a boat-hook. I ordered the man by my side to return it with his jacket tied on to the end of an oar; being anxious to see whether his agitation had calmed down and left him fit for his duty again. He followed my directions steadily and when he had got his jacket on again, asked me to pardon him for losing his self-command in a quiet, altered voice.

I shook hands with him, and gave him the helm, in proof that my confidence was restored; then stood up and turned my face to the westward once again. I looked long into the belt of clear sky, which was narrowing already as the cloud-bank above sank over it. I looked with all my heart and soul and strength. It was only when my eyes could stand the strain on them no longer, that I gave in, and sat down again by the tiller. If I had not been supported by a firm trust in the mercy of Providence, which had preserved us thus far, I am afraid I should have abandoned myself at that trying time to downright hopeless, speechless despair.

It would not express much to any but seafaring readers if I mentioned the number of leagues off that I considered the ship to be. I shall give a better idea of the terrible distance there was between us, when I say that no landsman's eye could have made her out at all, and that none of us sailors could have seen her but for the bright opening in the sky, which made even a speck on the waters visible to a mariner's experienced sight all that weary way off. When I have said this, I have said enough to render it plain to every man's understanding that it was a sheer impossibility to make out what course the ship was steering, seeing that we had no chance of keeping her in view at that closing time of day for more than another half-hour, at most. There she was, astern to leeward of us; and here were we, driving for our lives before the wind, with any means of kindling a light that we might have possessed on leaving our ship wetted through long ago—with no guns to fire as signals of distress in the darkness—and with no choice, if the wind shifted, but still to scud in any direction in which it might please to drive us. Supposing, even at the best, that the ship was steering on our course, and would overhaul us in the night, what chance had we of making our position known to her in the darkness? Truly, look at it anyhow we might from our poor mortal point of view, our prospect of deliverance seemed to be of the most utterly hopeless kind that it is possible to conceive.

The men felt this bitterly, as the cloud-bank dropped to the verge of the waters, and the sun set redly behind it. The moaning and lamenting among them was miserable to hear, when the last speck and phantom of the ship had vanished from view. Some few still swore they saw her when there was hardly a flicker of light left in the west, and only gave up looking out, and dropped down in the boat, at my express orders. I charged them all solemnly to set an example of courage to the passengers, and to trust the rest to the infinite wisdom and mercy of the Creator of us all. Some murmured, some fell to repeating scraps out of the Bible and Prayer-Book, some wandered again in their minds. This went on till the darkness gathered—then a great hush of silence fell drearily over passengers and crew; and the waves and the wind hissed and howled about us, as if we were tossing in the midst of them, a boat-load of corpses already!

Twice in the forepart of the night the clouds overhead parted for a little, and let the blessed moonlight down upon us. On the first of those occasions, I myself served out the last drops of fresh water we had left. The two women—poor suffering creatures!—were past drinking. Miss Coleshaw shivered a little when I moistened her lips with the water; and Mrs. Atherfield, when I did the same for her, drew her breath with a faint, fluttering sigh, which was just enough to show that she was not dead yet. The Captain still lay as he had lain ever since I got on board the boat. The others, both passengers and crew, managed for the most part to swallow their share of the water—the men being just sufficiently roused by it to get up on their knees, while the moonlight lasted, and look about wildly over the ocean for a chance of seeing the ship again. When the clouds gathered once more; they crouched back in their places with a long groan of despair. Hearing that, and dreading the effect of the pitchy darkness (to say nothing of the fierce wind and sea) on their sinking spirits, I resolved to combat their despondency, if it were still possible to contend against it, by giving them something to do. First telling them that no man could say at what time of the night the ship (in case she was steering our course) might forge ahead of us, or how near she might be when she passed, I recommended that all who had the strength should join their voices at regular intervals, and shout their loudest when the boat rose highest on the waves, on the chance of that cry of distress being borne by the wind within hearing of the watch on board the ship. It is unnecessary to say that I knew well how near it was to an absolute impossibility that this

last feeble exertion on our parts could lead to any result. I only proposed it because I was driven to the end of my resources to keep up the faintest flicker of spirit among the men. They received my proposal with more warmth and readiness than I had ventured in their hopeless state, to expect from them. Up to the turn of midnight they resolutely raised their voices with me, at intervals of from five to ten minutes, whenever the boat was tossed highest on the waves. The wind seemed to whirl our weak cries savagely out of our mouths almost before we could utter them. I, sitting astern in the boat, only heard them, as it seemed, for something like an instant of time. But even that was enough to make me creep all over—the cry was so forlorn and fearful. Of all the dreadful sounds I had heard since the first striking of the ship, that shrill wail of despair—rising on the wave-tops, one moment; whirled away, the next, into the black night—was the most frightful that entered my ears. There are times, even now, when it seems to be ringing in them still.

Whether our first gleam of moonshine fell upon old Mr. Rarx, while he was sleeping, and helped to upset his weak brains altogether, is more than I can say. But, for some reason or other, before the clouds parted and let the light down on us for the second time, and while we were driving along awfully through the blackest of the night, he stirred in his place, and began rambling and raving again more vehemently than ever. To hear him now—that is to say, as well as I could hear him for the wind—he was still down in his gold-mine; but was laden so heavy with his precious metal that he could not get out, and was in mortal peril of being drowned by the water rising in the bottom of the shaft. So far, his maundering attracted my attention disagreeably, and did no more. But when he began—if I may say so—to take the name of the dear little dead child in vain, and to mix her up with himself and his miserly greed of gain, I got angry, and called to the men forward to give him a shake and make him hold his tongue. Whether any of them obeyed or not, I don't know—Mr. Rarx went on raving louder than ever. The shrill wind was now hardly more shrill than he. He swore he saw the white frock of our poor little lost pet fluttering in the daylight, at the top of the mine, and he screamed out to her in a great fright that the gold was heavy, and the water rising fast, and that she must come down quick as lightning if she meant to be in time to help him. I called again angrily to the men to silence him; and just as I did so, the clouds began to part for the second time, and the white tip of the moon grew visible.

"There she is!" screeches Mr. Rarx; and I saw him by the faint light, scramble on his knees in the bottom of the boat, and wave a ragged old handkerchief up at the moon.

"Pull him down!" I called out. "Down with him; and tie his arms and legs!"

Of the men who could still move about, not one paid any attention to me. They were all upon their knees again, looking out in the strengthening moonlight for a sight of the ship.

"Quick, Golden Lucy!" screams Mr. Rarx, and creeps under the thwarts right forward into the bows of the boat. "Quick! my darling, my beauty, quick! The gold is heavy, and the water rises fast! Come down and save me, Golden Lucy! Let all the rest of the world drown, and save me! Me! me! me! me!"

He shouted these last words out at the top of his cracked, croaking voice, and got on his feet, as I conjectured (for the coat we had spread for a sail now hid him from me) in the bows of the boat. Not one of the crew so much as looked round at him, so eagerly were their eyes seeking for the ship. The man sitting by me was sunk in a deep sleep. If I had left the helm for a moment in that wind and sea, it would have been the death of every soul of us. I shouted desperately to the raving wretch to sit down. A screech that seemed to cut the very wind in two answered me. A huge wave tossed the boat's head up wildly at the same moment. I looked aside to leeward as the wash of the great roller swept by us, gleaming of a lurid, bluish white in the moonbeams; I looked and saw, in one second of time, the face of Mr. Rarx rush past on the wave, with the foam seething in his hair and the moon shining in his eyes. Before I could draw my breath he was a hundred yards astern of us, and the night and the sea had swallowed him up and had hid his secret, which he had kept all the voyage, from our mortal curiosity, for ever.

"He's gone! he's drowned!" I shouted to the men forward.

None of them took any notice; none of them left off looking out over the ocean for a sight of the ship. Nothing that I could say on the subject of our situation at that fearful time can, in my opinion, give such an idea of the extremity and the frightfulness of it, as the relation of this one fact. I leave it to speak by itself the sad and shocking truth, and pass on gladly to the telling of what happened next, at a later hour of the night.

After the clouds had shut out the moon again, the wind dropped a little and shifted a point or two, so as to shape our course nearer to the eastward. How the hours passed after that, till the dawn came, is more than I can tell. The nearer the time of daylight approached the more completely everything seemed to drop out of my mind, except the one thought of where the ship we had seen in the evening might be, when we looked for her with the morning light.

It came at last—that grey, quiet light which was to end all our uncertainty; which

was to show us if we were saved, or to warn us if we were to prepare for death. With the first streak in the east, every one of the boat's company, except the sleeping and the senseless, roused up and looked out in breathless silence upon the sea. Slowly and slowly the daylight strengthened, and the darkness rolled off farther and farther before it over the face of the waters. The first pale flush of the sun flew trembling along the paths of light broken through the grey wastes of the eastern clouds. We could look clearly—we could see far; and there, ahead of us—O! merciful, bountiful providence of God!—there was the ship!

I have honestly owned the truth, and confessed to the human infirmity under suffering of myself, my passengers, and my crew. I have earned, therefore, as I would fain hope, the right to record it to the credit of all, that the men, the moment they set eyes on the ship, poured out their whole hearts in humble thanksgiving to the Divine Mercy which had saved them from the very jaws of death. They did not wait for me to bid them do this; they did it of their own accord, in their own language, fervently, earnestly, with one will and one heart.

We had hardly made the ship out—a fine brigantine, hoisting English colours—before we observed that her crew suddenly hove her up in the wind. At first we were at a loss to understand this; but as we drew nearer, we discovered that she was getting the Surf-boat (which had kept ahead of us all through the night) alongside of her, under the lee bow. My men tried to cheer when they saw their companions in safety, but their weak cries died away in tears and sobbing.

In another half hour we, too, were alongside of the brigantine.

From this point, I recollect nothing very distinctly. I remember faintly many loud voices and eager faces;—I remember fresh strong willing fellows, with a colour in their cheeks, and a smartness in their movements that seemed quite preternatural to me at that time, hanging over us in the rigging of the brigantine, and dropping down from her sides into our boat;—I remember trying with my feeble hands to help them in the difficult and perilous task of getting the two poor women and the Captain on board;—I remember one dark hairy giant of a man swearing that it was enough to break his heart, and catching me in his arms like a child—and from that moment I remember nothing more with the slightest certainty for over a week of time.

When I came to my own senses again, in my cot on board the brigantine my first inquiries were naturally for my fellow-sufferers. Two—a passenger in the Long-boat, and one of the crew of the Surf-boat—had sunk in spite of all the care that could be taken of them. The rest were likely, with time and attention, to recover. Of those who have been particularly mentioned in this narrative, Mrs. Atherfield had shown signs of rallying the soonest; Miss Coleshaw, who had held out longer against exhaustion, was now the slower to recover. Captain Ravender, though slowly mending, was still not able to speak or to move in his cot without help. The sacrifices for us all which this good man had so nobly undergone, not only in the boat, but before that, when he had deprived himself of his natural rest on the dark nights that preceded the wreck of the Golden Mary, had sadly undermined his natural strength of constitution. He, the heartiest of all, when we sailed from England, was now, through his unwearying devotion to his duty and to us, the last to recover, the longest to linger between life and death.

My next questions (when they helped me on deck to get my first blessed breath of fresh air) related to the vessel that had saved us. She was bound to the Columbia river—a long way to the northward of the port for which we had sailed in the Golden Mary. Most providentially for us, shortly after we had lost sight of the brigantine in the shades of the evening, she had been caught in a squall, and had sprung her foretopmast badly. This accident had obliged them to lay-to for some hours, while they did their best to secure the spar, and had warned them, when they continued on their course, to keep the ship under easy sail through the night. But for this circumstance we must, in all human probability, have been too far astern when the morning dawned, to have had the slightest chance of being discovered.

Excepting always some of the stoutest of our men, the next of the Long-boat's company who was helped on deck was Mrs. Atherfield. Poor soul! when she and I first looked at each other, I could see that her heart went back to the early days of our voyage, when the Golden Lucy and I used to have our game of hide-and-seek round the mast. She squeezed my hand as hard as she could with her wasted trembling fingers, and looked up piteously in my face, as if she would like to speak to little Lucy's playfellow, but dared not trust herself—then turned away quickly and laid her head against the bulwark, and looked out upon the desolate sea that was nothing to her now but her darling's grave. I was better pleased when I saw her later in the day, sitting by Captain Ravender's cot; for she seemed to take comfort in nursing him. Miss Coleshaw soon afterwards got strong enough to relieve her at this duty; and, between them, they did the Captain such a world of good, both in body and spirit, that he also got strong enough before long to come on deck, and to thank me, in his old generous self-forgetful way, for having done my duty—the duty which I had learnt how to do by his example.

Hearing what our destination had been when we sailed from England, the captain of

the brigantine (who had treated us with the most unremitting attention and kindness, and had been warmly seconded in his efforts for our good by all the people under his command) volunteered to go sufficiently out of his course to enable us to speak the first Californian coasting-vessel sailing in the direction of San Francisco. We were lucky in meeting with one of these sooner than we expected. Three days after parting from the kind captain of the brigantine, we, the surviving passengers and crew of the Golden Mary, touched the firm ground once more, on the shores of California.

We were hardly collected here before we were obliged to separate again. Captain Ravender, though he was hardly yet in good travelling trim, accompanied Mrs. Atherfield inland, to see her safe under her husband's protection. Miss Coleshaw went with them, to stay with Mrs. Atherfield for a little while before she attempted to proceed with any matters of her own which had brought her to this part of the world. The rest of us, who were left behind with nothing particular to do until the Captain's return, followed the passengers to the gold diggings. Some few of us had enough of the life there in a very short time. The rest seemed bitten by old Mr. Rarx's mania for gold, and insisted on stopping behind when Rames and I proposed going back to the port. We two, and five of our steadiest seamen, were all the officers and crew left to meet the Captain on his return from the inland country.

He reported that he had left Mrs. Atherfield and Miss Coleshaw safe and comfortable under Mr. Atherfield's care. They sent affectionate messages to all of us, and especially (I am proud to say) to me. After hearing this good news, there seemed nothing better to do than to ship on board the first vessel bound for England. There were plenty in port, ready to sail, and only waiting for the men belonging to them who had deserted to the gold-diggings. We were all snapped up eagerly, and offered any rate we chose to set on our services, the moment we made known our readiness to ship for England—all, I ought to have said, except Captain Ravender, who went along with us in the capacity of passenger only.

Nothing of any moment occurred on the voyage back. The Captain and I got ashore at Gravesend safe and hearty, and went up to London as fast as the train could carry us, to report the calamity that had occurred to the owners of the Golden Mary. When that duty had been performed, Captain Ravender went back to his own house at Poplar, and I travelled to the West of England to report myself, to my old father and mother.

Here I might well end all these pages of writing; but I cannot refrain from adding a few more sentences, to tell the reader what I am sure he will be glad to hear. In the summer-time of this present year eighteen hundred and fifty-six, I happened to be at New York, and having spare time on my hands, and spare cash in my pocket, I walked into one of the biggest and grandest of their Ordinaries there, to have my dinner. I had hardly sat down at table, before who should I see opposite but Mrs. Atherfield, as bright-eyed and pretty as ever, with a gentleman on her right hand, and on her left—another Golden Lucy! Her hair was a shade or two darker than the hair of my poor little pet of past sad times; but in all other respects the living child reminded me so strongly of the dead, that I quite started at the first sight of her. I could not tell, if I was to try, how happy we were after dinner, or how much we had to say to each other. I was introduced to Mrs. Atherfield's husband, and heard from him, among other things, that Miss Coleshaw was married to her old sweetheart, who had fallen into misfortunes and errors, and whom she was determined to set right by giving him the great chance in life of getting a good wife. They were settled in America, like Mr. and Mrs. Atherfield—these last and the child being on their way, when I met them, to visit a friend living in the northernmost part of the States.

With the relation of this circumstance, and with my personal testimony to the good health and spirits of Captain Ravender the last time I saw him, ends all that I have to say in connection with the subject of the Wreck of the Golden Mary, and the Great Deliverance of her People at Sea.

THE END OF THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1856.

The First Weekly Number of the Next Volume of HOUSEHOLD WORDS, to be Published on Saturday, the Tenth of January, Eighteen Hundred and Fifty-seven, will contain the Commencement of A NEW STORY, BY WILKIE COLLINS, called

THE DEAD SECRET;

Which will be continued from week to week until completed.

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